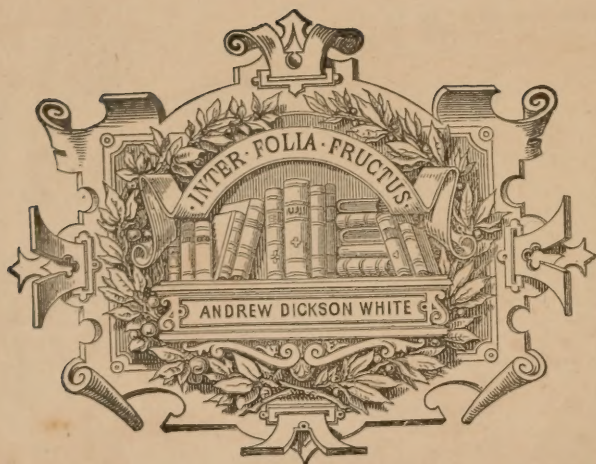


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FROM THE
ACCESSION TO THE DECEASE
OF
KING GEORGE THE THIRD.

BY JOHN ADOLPHUS, ESQ.

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* The reader will observe that the execution of this woman was mentioned in a former page, 457. I did not discover the repetition until it was too late to correct it.

THE
HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

GEORGE THE THIRD.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTY-SECOND.

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1790.

War between
Russia and
Turkey.

The Turks
make peace
with Germany
and Prussia.

FROM the war in India, so entirely English, attention is called to one less, apparently, of British interest, but in which, by force of treaties, and for the preservation of the general system of Europe, it was for a time to be apprehended that this country would be actively engaged.

On the conclusion of a truce between the Emperor of Germany and the Turks*, negotiations were commenced for peace. The Ottomans hoped, through the distractions which prevailed in the Austrian dominions in the latter days of Joseph the Second, to recover, by treaty, those provinces which they had not been able, by military prowess, to retain. Frederick William, King of Prussia, interfered; but his views were not free from ambition and selfishness: his proposals had, for a principal object, the acquisition of Dantzick from Poland. Leopold, fearful of giving offence to the powerful and haughty Catherine, would not consent to an arrangement which would enable Prussia to command the mouth of the Vistula; but, after some intrigues, which removed Prince Hertzberg from the Prussian administration, a treaty was concluded, by which the Turks regained all the possessions they had surrendered, except Choczim, which was to be retained only for a time. Prussia gave up, for the present, the hope of obtaining Dantzick; and arrangements were made with respect to boundaries, to the apparent satisfaction of all parties†.

July 27.

Progress of

If this compact deprived the Empress of an ally,

* Chapter 68, vol. iv. p. 506.

† Ségur, *Histoire des principaux Événemens du Règne de Frédéric Guillaume II*, tome ii, p. 170.

the peace of Verela* relieved her from an enemy, and left her to contend with the Turks alone. The summer passed inactively away, and the Mahomedans, inapprehensive of a winter campaign, permitted the departure of many troops from their stations. This was the season in which they were to experience the most active hostilities. Potemkin enjoyed, in camp, the luxury of a Persian satrap; but, far from neglecting military duties, he captured Ackerman, Kernan, Chedseberg, and Palanka; Bender surrendered at discretion; and Kamenskoi took and burned to ashes the superb town of Galatz. An attempt of the Serasquier Batal Bey to make a diversion, or carry the war into the Asiatic dominions of Russia, failed: he was routed and taken prisoner, with many of his principal officers, and the loss of his artillery and stores.

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1790.
the war with
Russia.

October 10.

Ismail, or Ismailow, with a brave and determined, but insufficient, garrison, maintained resistance during a siege of seven months. Impatience occasioned irritation in the minds of the besiegers; and General Suwarow†, acting under the positive commands of Prince Potemkin, undertook to storm the fortress. At five in the morning, on Christmas Day, he commenced a furious cannonade; at seven, dividing his army into eight columns, he advanced to the attack; but, by the persevering valour of the besieged, he was repulsed, with great slaughter. To prevent a total failure, and to inspire the troops with his own intrepidity and enthusiasm, Suwarow planted a national banner on a dangerous point of the fortifications, declared his resolution to defend it to his last breath, and asked if his followers would basely desert him, and suffer the Russian flag to be carried away in triumph by the infidels. The soldiers returned to repeated attacks, and the town was taken by storm. The horrors

Siege of
Ismail.

December 25.
Capture and
massacre.

* Chapter 68, vol. iv. p. 508.

† The cruelty of this General was so odious, that Potemkin, at last, refused to entrust him with command. He plundered and burned every town he captured, treating the inhabitants with ruthless barbarity, harnessing the ministers of religion to military carriages, and freezing the Jews to death by immersion in water.

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which ensued are painful to the mind, and, if recited, would be only a monotonous repetition of atrocities. No quarter was given; the progress of the plunderer was impeded by the heaps of slain; respect for bravery was swallowed up in the insatiable desire of revenge; and the returns, as well as they could be made, presented a catalogue of twenty-four thousand victims on the side of the Turks, without enumerating the loss of the besiegers. Suwarow announced the conquest to the Empress by a laconic note in these words: "The "proud Ismail is at your feet." Consternation seized the Mussulmans; the Vizier Gazi-Hassan died of a broken heart, and, after an interval, was succeeded by Youssuff Pacha; but his acknowledged valour and conduct could not restore the fortunes of his country*.

Ambitious
views of Catherine.

Favoured thus by fortune, the pride and ambition of Catherine knew no bounds. The project of expelling the Turks from Europe, and taking possession of their capital, was always present to her mind: it impelled her exertions in war, swayed her policy in peace; her alliances were permanent or inconstant in proportion as other powers seemed to favour or to oppose this cherished plan; and she caused her grandson to be christened Constantine, in the undisguised hope that he would, at a future period, reign as Greek Emperor, in the city to which his name so evidently alluded. To distress the Porte and further her projects, she had fomented an insurrection of the Greeks: fighting for emancipation from intolerable thralldom, they displayed valour and judgment; they equipped a small navy, which, for a time, greatly incommoded their oppressors; but, in the end, being left without the expected support from Russia, they relapsed into inaction, and exchanged the hope of liberty and glory for the miserable boon of impunity.

Insurrection
of the Greeks.

Further projects of Catherine.

Catherine had also a design of erecting the provinces of Moldavia, Wallachia, and Bessarabia, into an independent sovereignty, to be governed, as it was expressed in general terms, by a Christian prince; by

* Chiefly from Castéra, tome iii p. 77.

which some understood Constantine, and others Potemkin. This intention had been communicated to the courts of London and Berlin; but they declined interfering, on account of the effect such a transaction would produce on the interests of various European powers*.

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The chief object of Catherine's exertions was Poland, in the subjugation and appropriation of which, she saw the removal of the principal obstacle to her aims on Turkey. If, for a time, it appeared that her perplexities in war and intrigue diverted her from this object, it was always kept steadily in view, and she saw with impatience the efforts made by Stanislaus Augustus to give to his country a constitution calculated to nerve her strength and assure her independence.

Her views on
Poland.

Knowing the views and apprized of the feelings of Catherine, thinking also that the preservation of the Turkish empire in Europe and of the independence of Poland was essential to the political and commercial welfare of all nations, the British ministry saw with anxiety and alarm the progress of events so evidently tending to the destruction of both. Impressed, apparently, with similar opinions, the courts of Berlin and the Hague employed all their means of co-operation, and all their influence and persuasion, to induce other powers to adopt their views. The state of Europe was little favourable to their endeavours. France and Spain could not be appealed to; and the Emperor of Germany was beset with too many difficulties to hazard much on such a subject. A treaty of defensive alliance had been concluded between England and Prussia†; and it was supposed that its terms were sufficiently extensive to oblige Great Britain to assist the King, should he be at war with Catherine.

Feelings of the
British ministry.

Conduct of
Prussia and
Holland.

Treaty with
Prussia.

That sagacious and politic princess saw without dread the formation of a confederacy which portended neither firmness of union, nor vigour of operation. She knew the variable and uncertain politics of Frederick William; his undisguised desire to possess Dantzick

Mr. Fawkener
at Petersburg.

* Tomline's Life of Pitt, vol. ii. p. 326.

† 13th of August, 1788.

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and Thorn shewed a point on which his fidelity to any engagement for maintaining the independence of Poland might be assailed; and she was not to be deterred from the pursuit of her vast schemes by the fear of inconveniences to be produced by Dutch or English hostility. She did not abate her perseverance, but maintained a more than usual loftiness. When Great Britain, through Mr. Fawkener, who was sent to Petersburg for the purpose, offered to mediate between her and the Turks, the official answers, far less courteous than those which were generally employed on such occasions, were:—"The Empress makes war and makes peace when she pleases, without consulting any other power."—"She is not to be dictated to."—"She will not permit any interference in the management or government of her affairs*."

Naval force
proposed in
Parliament.

December 7.
Observations
by Mr. Fox.

Answer of
Mr. Pitt.

Reception of
of Mr.
Fawkener.

Ockzakow.

The English ministry, although anxious to avoid precipitate hostilities, were yet determined to support the national dignity, and to vindicate, if necessary, the true interests of Europe; they were desirous of retaining the naval force already at their command, and proposed, in the committee of supply, a resolution for employing twenty-four thousand seamen. Mr. Fox said that if this force was to be merely temporary, because the nation could not suddenly disarm after the preparations against Spain, he should cheerfully concur in the vote; but if intended to be permanent, he should strenuously oppose it. Mr. Pitt answered, that there were circumstances in the present state of Europe which rendered it necessary to maintain, for a time, an armament of increased extent.

Mr. Fawkener was treated by the Empress, not with coldness and indifference alone, but with expressions which marked distrust, if not offence. A principal object of his mission was to propose a treaty, by which Russia should restore to the Grand Signor the town of Ockzakow, and the country between the Bog and the Niester. Ockzakow, or Otchakov, situated at the mouth of the Niester, on the Black Sea, was not only a harbour for the Turkish vessels of war,

* Rivington's Annual Register, vol. xxxiii, p. 191.

but the only place of strength between the adjacent frontier and the capital, from which it is separated by only one hundred and ninety miles of unarmed and defenceless country.

The Empress shewing a firm determination to resist the demands made by Mr. Fawkener, a message from the King was delivered to both Houses, stating that the endeavours which he had used, in conjunction with his allies, to effect a pacification between Russia and the Porte, having hitherto been unsuccessful, and the consequences which might arise from the further progress of the war being highly important to his interests, to those of his allies, and to Europe in general, he judged it requisite to add weight to his representations, by making a further augmentation of his naval force.

To the address on this message, proposed by Lord Grenville, an amendment was moved by Earl Fitzwilliam, assuring his Majesty of the support of that House whenever, on sufficient grounds, it should appear that there was no prospect of success without an increase of naval force.

This amendment was supported chiefly by Lord Porchester, the Earl of Carlisle, Lord Stormont, Lord Loughborough, and the Marquis of Lansdown. They censured ministers for demanding a vote of confidence without a clear statement of their grounds of proceeding. The House could not know the purposes of the intended armament. To call for confidence without any explanation, was most unreasonable. Alluding to the late armament against Spain, and the war which was raging in India, Lord Loughborough expressed astonishment and horror at the system of ministers; taking a general sweep of all nations and kingdoms, meddling, irritating, and insulting, in one place; in another, directly and avowedly rearing up the power of the empire to crush and exterminate. Acapulca ships, the mines of Mexico and Peru, and the certainty of success against a weak and defenceless enemy, could not now be presented to allure the base and dastardly propensities of human nature; the Russians had iron,

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March 28.
King's mes-
sage to Par-
liament.

Address op-
posed in the
House of
Lords.

Amendment
moved.

supported.

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but no gold. The Empress, unwillingly drawn into the war by the aggression of the Turks, had shewn, amidst her great successes in arms, ample proofs of moderation, by insisting on no greater terms than she had before. Russia had ever been deemed the natural ally of this country. If the present measure was in contemplation, why did ministers disarm? The fleet had only served to pillage the public, and to make a shew between the Isle of Wight and Portsmouth. Instead of gaining advantage from the languid state of France, ministers had actually effected what France herself would have attempted—making Russia our enemy. Nor were the objections omitted which arise from the expenses of war—the pressure of taxation; starving; manufactures shackled; and revenues raised which would impair the nerves and sinews of posterity, merely to support projects of ministers, and restore Ockzakow to the Turks.

Opposed.

In answer, Lord Grenville and the Lord Chancellor denied the propriety of making unwarranted disclosures. His Majesty had required an additional naval force; ministers would be responsible for its application. If it should become evident that the Russians, by their conquests, were surrounding the whole of Poland, and acquiring an ascendancy injurious to Prussia; nay, that she was stretching herself out so as to trench upon the Emperor; we ought to enter into the views of our allies, and arrest a career so materially threatening our interests. The intrigues of France had never assumed a bold, manly aspect; they were a tissue of political fopperies, as distant from true wisdom as from morality and honour. She had degraded the Ottoman Porte into a mere instrument, to be employed in projects discreditable to themselves and injurious to their deluded ally. The Turks were capable of being made highly serviceable to England; and Russia, if she was our natural ally, had acted in a most unnatural manner.

The amendment was negatived, and the address carried by a great majority*.

* 97 to 34.

In moving the address in the House of Commons, Mr. Pitt entered rather more fully into the views of government than Lord Grenville. He regretted the failure of his Majesty's efforts, in conjunction with his allies, for re-establishing general and permanent peace; but he trusted that the House would agree that a temporary expense might be judiciously incurred, to prevent an alteration in the relative condition of the powers of Europe, and the weakening of the security to be derived from the present system of defensive alliance. If, by the existing war, the power of Russia were to be increased, the effect must be felt by all the rest of Europe, and more immediately in that quarter with which we were most intimately connected. His Majesty had considered it necessary to augment his naval force; and it was deemed consistent with honour and policy to act with prudent foresight, instead of increasing danger by delay.

Mr. Coke, of Norfolk, proposed an amendment, omitting the greater part of the address, and deprecating measures which tended to involve the country in hostilities, upon grounds so little understood, and insufficiently explained.

In the debate, all the topics urged in the House of Lords were introduced and enforced. The discussion derived its chief character from able speeches by Mr. Fox and Mr. Burke, in support of the amendment, and the answer given by Mr. Pitt. Among the opposition members were Lord Wycombe, Mr. Lambton, Mr. Somers Cocks, and Mr. Vyner. On the part of government, Mr. Steele alone assisted Mr. Pitt.

Necessary information was said to be refused. Confidence in ministers was occasionally requisite; but even that was only a necessary evil, and ought to be always the least that the nature of things would admit; and Mr. Coke observed, that, after having watched, with a jealous eye, all the measures of Mr. Pitt's administration, he could not place confidence either in his abilities or his integrity. In moving the address, Mr. Fox said, the right honourable gentleman had enveloped himself in mystery and import-

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1791.

Motion in the
House of Com-
mons.

Amendment
moved.

Debate.

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ance, but had explained nothing. His speech, like that mentioned in a modern play, was "finely confused" and very alarming."

Mr. Pitt said he claimed confidence only as it had been granted to all his predecessors; subject to the censure of Parliament, operating either his dismissal or punishment; but he trusted the House would never withdraw that necessary confidence which the purposes of executive government required.

General arguments against the armament.

The honour of the nation, it was said, did not call for the present proceeding. Russia had neither invaded our territories, nor attacked the trade or property of British subjects, or of allies whom we were bound to protect. By her conquests from the Turks, it was said that the Empress might destroy the balance of power, and endanger our greatness or our existence. Yet, during twenty years, we had rather assisted than opposed her aggrandizement. The Turkish empire was no part of the balance of power in Europe; they considered themselves wholly Asiatic. They had no resident at our court, in Prussia, or Holland. They despised and contemned all Christian princes as infidels, and only wished to subdue and exterminate them and their people: they were worse than savages. All that was holy in religion, all that was moral and humane, demanded an abhorrence of every thing which could enlarge the power of that cruel and wasteful empire. The progress of the Russian arms was but an empty and a false pretence; for, in 1788, 1789, and 1790, the Empress had been crowned with success; the King, in his speeches, lamented the continuance of war, but "rejoiced that it did not endanger the peace and interests of his kingdoms." Ministers might say that these conquests did not begin to be alarming till the fall of Ockzakow: that town was taken in 1788, and the subsequent speeches from the throne still expressed the same sentiments. Equally false was the pretence that the Empress wanted to drive the Turks out of Europe; for, although she had conquered the whole country between her frontier and the Danube, she had voluntarily proposed to restore all she

had gained between that river and the Niester, except Ockzakow, which was necessary to cover her other conquests between the Niester and the Bog, and to free from danger her vessels sailing from Cherson to the Black Sea: the adjacent country was of no value. With intolerable insolence, ministers required the Empress, in her career of victory, in a glorious and successful war, which had been forced upon her, to lay down her arms, restore her conquests, and obtain no compensation for her expense of blood and treasure. Ministers, aided by the intrigues of Prussia, first stirred up the Turks to their own destruction; next excited the King of Sweden, and shamefully abandoned him; and, in a manner equally vain and useless, had meddled in the affairs of the Netherlands, and disarmed, after the convention with Spain, before a categorical answer from Russia had been obtained; thus entailing on the country a new expense, for a purpose which might have been so much more easily accomplished when we had so great a naval force afloat.

We had expended four millions to obtain cat-skins from the north-west of America, and might now add blood to treasure to gain bear-skins in the north-east of Europe.

To the observations on the friendship of the Empress, ministers replied, by referring to her conduct during the American war, when she had projected and put herself at the head of an armed neutrality, peculiarly hostile to our interests. To this it was replied, that there was no reason for blaming the Empress more than Sweden, Denmark, and other powers, who acceded to that compact; and the idea did not originate with her, but with the late King of Prussia. Our defensive system, ministers observed, rendered a connexion necessary, and, had we the privilege of electing, Prussia would be our most judicious choice. At the period, when the former conduct of Great Britain toward Russia had been alluded to, Turkey was closely linked with France; and we had no reason to interfere in behalf of the ally of our rival, nor cause to dread the aggrandisement of Russia.

Answer of
ministers.

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The armament against Spain had been dismissed, because it could not have acted for several months, and it would cost less to renew than to retain it. In the aggrandisement of Russia, and the depression of Turkey, our commercial and political interests were seriously concerned. The aggrandisement of Russia would be destructive to Poland, and highly dangerous to Prussia. The motion for omitting a certain portion of the address was lost*.

Subsequent
motions.April 1.
Earl Fitz-
william.

Several motions were afterwards made; but, as the debates produced little novelty in argument, and no extraordinary information, they are rather enumerated than detailed; some striking observations or circumstances being alone selected. On a motion by Earl Fitzwilliam, generally disapproving of the whole course of proceedings, the Earl of Guildford delivered his first speech in the upper House. Age, infirmity, and blindness, had so little effect on his mental faculties, that they who had heard him, when Lord North, expressed unaltered admiration. The previous question was put on the first resolution and negatived†.

12th.
Mr. Grey.

Mr. Grey next moved a series of resolutions, affirming, in substance, the principal propositions advanced by Earl Fitzwilliam, with some additions. His chief endeavour was to shew the small value of Ockzakow, either to Russia, Turkey, or Europe in general.

The answer to this argument was derived from the importance assigned to it by Catherine herself, who, unless permitted to retain it, would listen to no negotiation. Mr. Stanley averred that the fate of Constantinople, the safety of the southern provinces of Poland, and the future prosperity and consequence of Catherine's new empire of Taurida, absolutely depended on Ockzakow. It was the only fortress of consequence likely to stop an army between her frontiers and the Turkish capital; she insisted on retaining it, while, with simulated generosity, she offered to give up provinces unprotected and defenceless, and which she could regain at pleasure; and, the Turks bereft of every part to which they could retire, she might convey her forces by sea

* 228 to 135.

† 94 to 34.

to any station near Constantinople ; forts might be surprised, batteries silenced, and the Russian standard flying on the towers of the Grand Signor's palace, before any European court could have been informed of a meditated attack. Amid some other speeches, little worthy of notice, Mr. Sheridan " returned to his old lunes," and ridiculed Lord Belgrave, because he had used a Latin and not a Greek quotation ; and Mr. Dundas defended the measures of government, but declined all explicit disclosures, claiming for Mr. Pitt a continuance of that confidence which he had always merited and always received. This motion was also disposed of by a division on the previous question*.

Three days after this division, Mr. Baker moved resolutions on the impropriety of burthening the country with new taxes, while no satisfactory information was afforded. In this debate, Mr. Windham affirmed that the sense of the country was against the armament, and the manufacturers alarmed. Mr. William Grant, justifying the reserve of ministers, exposed, as an absurdity, the attempt to intrude the legislative into the executive branch of government. The minister could conduct a negotiation because he was responsible, but it could not be carried on by five hundred and fifty-eight persons.

15th.

Mr. Baker.

Mr. Pitt declared that he would not yield to urgent calls, or be affected by harsh epithets ; but, in his individual capacity of a member of Parliament, objected to the resolutions, as exposing the country to the danger of losing the benefit of the negotiation, and altering the established mode of conducting public business.

Mr. Fox denied that the House had ever proposed to interfere unconstitutionally : they claimed an indisputable right to judge the objects of negotiation ; but confided to the executive power the means of obtaining them. The constitution knew no such thing as confidence ; nor could he see on what principle five hundred and fifty-eight gentlemen, because they happened

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to be assembled in a House of Parliament, were to pretend ignorance of that which all the foreign gazettes and all the memorials disclosed. Toward the close of his argument, Mr. Fox unfortunately adverted to France, and declared that, notwithstanding differences of opinion, he admired the new constitution, considering it altogether as the most stupendous and glorious edifice of liberty which had been erected on the foundation of human integrity in any time or country. Mr. Burke, on this, rose with great appearance of emotion; but his voice was drowned by cries of "question;" and, on a division, Mr. Baker's motion was lost*.

Other motions.

Three other motions were made. One by the Earl Fitzwilliam, on the injury which threatened our commercial interests; one by Mr. Thomas Grenville on the impolicy of war, considering the state of taxation, and of our political and commercial interests; and a third by Mr. Grey on the want of information. In the debates, there was little to inform or to interest, after those which had already occurred. The motions were all rejected on divisions†.

May 9.

25th.

Effect of these
discussions.

On a slight examination, it might appear that in these reiterated attacks, where success was not to be expected, the opposition were uselessly wasting their energy, and misemploying their strength; but, in fact, their manœuvre was skilful and their perseverance most judicious. Mr. Windham had truly said, that the armament was not popular; and Mr. Fox, in his most animated manner, had promised the renewal and frequent repetition of motions in different forms. "The sullen and obstinate silence of the minister," he said, "when he was about to plunge the country into a war, could not and should not be endured. The division which had already taken place that evening must have convinced the minister that his war was unpopular, and that the country was roused from its long lethargy. The day of confidence and delusion was passed, and he must account to the awakened country for the

Unpopularity
of the arma-
ment.

April 12.
In Parliament.

* 254 to 162.

† The first, 96 to 29; the others, 208 to 114, and 170 to 75.

“deceptive language he had put into his Majesty’s
“speeches from the throne”.

In thus keeping the question always present to the public mind, the opposition had every advantage of impression. It has been observed, that the gladiator, who confines himself to defence alone, must fall at last; but, in the present conflict, ministers could not avail themselves of the usual weapons or forms of defence. To the numerous objections stating the absence of all just cause of hostility, the decline of commerce, the augmentation of taxes, and the refusal of information, answers of a speculative kind alone were offered, and confidence was required, even when those who consented to give it would not have been able to assign more than general reasons. No triumphant majorities crowned the measures in the House of Commons; the minister never numbered two to one, nor did his majority ever amount to one hundred; a proof that many members were unwilling to appear merely to declare confidence, while they would be obliged to confess that they themselves were not trusted. The public easily apprehended the evils of a war, foresaw the privations of the poor, who, as speakers in both Houses observed, were to be deprived of one-tenth of their beer and one night’s candle-light out of seven; or the pressure on the more opulent, which is alway felt by the lower classes. For these evils, they could not see compensation in captures or conquests, nor did they estimate very highly the restriction sought to be placed on imperial ambition, or the preservation of that to which they apprehended no danger, the balance of power.

It does not follow, from these circumstances, that war would have been improper, or that the views of ministers were unwise; the experience of subsequent times shews the contrary: but the armament was rendered so unpopular, and the state of affairs on the continent was so inauspicious, that the fleet was never employed; the project had a languishing existence, but, after a short time, fell into complete oblivion*.

* On this subject, and for a letter addressed by Mr. Pitt to Mr. Ewart, the British minister at Berlin, see Tomline’s Life of Pitt, vol. ii. p. 407.

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Resignation of
the Duke of
Leeds.

Convinced of the propriety of the view originally taken by his colleagues, and indignant at the appearance of their receding from the prosecution of their plans, the Duke of Leeds, with magnanimous dignity, resigned the office of Secretary of State. It was occupied by Lord Grenville, who was removed from the home department, and that office was conferred on Mr. Dundas.

Affairs of
Poland.

Poland, which ought to have formed a prominent point of consideration, was little noticed in the parliamentary discussions. Taught by experience that, under the existing forms of government, that country could never acquire importance, or even retain independence, her King, Stanislaus Augustus, laboured assiduously to give her a new constitution. It is not intended to relate all the efforts he was obliged to make, all the intrigues he was compelled to originate or to divert, all the proceedings of diets and of dietines, rendered necessary by the existing constitution. The agitation produced by the French revolution increased the difficulties of the task, and the Russian party in Poland opposed every obstacle to a definitive arrangement. Many months were consumed in debates; the views and alliances of different continental powers, the connexions formed and discussed during the war with Turkey, the armed position of the King of Prussia, his desire to obtain Dantzick and Thorn, the opposition of Russia to this claim, the troubles in Germany, and the treaties between that country, Prussia, Holland, and England, all contributed to embarrass the legislators of Poland; but, at length, a constitution was agreed to by the whole Diet, and, in great pomp and ceremony, the King, the clergy, the nobles, and the people, swore to maintain it as an institution on which the freedom and happiness of the country must depend*.

New constitu-
tion projected.1790,
Dec. to
1791.
May 3.
Framed.

* The proceedings of the day are thus described: After relating the intrigues and manœuvres by which the Russian party had vainly endeavoured to prevent the completion of the constitution, my author says, "Then Zabiello, deputy from Livonia, entreated the King and the Diet, without loss of time, to swear to the 'Constitution.'" A general shout of assent was heard. All the assembly rushed toward the throne, on which Stanislaus Augustus appeared in an attitude at

Of this constitution, it would be too much to pronounce that it was in all respects perfect ; but, considering the state of Poland, the errors of her ancient system, and the conflict of present interests and prejudices, it deserves the highest commendation*. It advanced no generalizing principles, made no declarations or statements which could affect the peace or well-being of other nations, or serve as texts to render tyranny permanent, or government impossible. It established the Roman Catholic, the known and ancient religion of the country, with absolute toleration of all others. The throne was no longer to be elective in such a degree as to endanger the public safety ; an election was to take place only on the extinction of the family of the Elector of Saxony, in whom the succession to the reigning monarch was vested. The *liberum veto* was not recognized ; but the privileges of corporations were preserved, and an equality of rights in all individuals was declared. Many ancient privileges were surrendered, but none were taken away by force. The clergy, the nobility, and the King, acquiesced in, or rather promoted, the change. Of this social compact Catherine was known to have expressed her unmitigated disapprobation ; but the war with Turkey, the alliances of other powers, and the proceedings in England, imposed on her, for the moment, the necessity of restraint†.

The obstacles which the war with the Porte had opposed to the ambition of Catherine were rapidly sur-

once striking and paternal. He commanded Turski, bishop of Cracow, to read the oath, which having repeated, word for word, he added, " I have sworn by " the Divinity, and never will retract my oath ; I invite all who love their coun- " try to follow me to the church to repeat the same." He went, attended by all the members of the Assembly, except twelve, and cheered by the acclamations of a countless multitude, who thronged the way and filled the cathedral. In a moment, without any previous order, the banners of all the corporations and the flags taken from enemies in former times, were seen floating around the altar. Enthusiasm was at its greatest height ; the King, the senate, the bishops, and the representatives of the people, holding up their hands toward God, invoked him to witness the oath which they all took to the country. A *Te Deum* was sung, and for this once, at least, that beautiful canticle was employed to celebrate the happiness of many millions of men, achieved without the effusion of a drop of blood or of a tear." *Histoire des trois démembrements de la Pologne*, tome iii, p. 107.

* See this constitution, *Histoire des trois démembrements*, tom. iii. p. 153. Ottrige's Annual Register, vol. xxxiii. p. 122. In the discussions respecting it, frequent references were made to an essay published by the celebrated Jean

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Its provisions.

Avowed dis-
approbation of
Catherine.

Success of
Catherine

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1791.	mounted. After the tremendous events at Ismail, the Turks were dismayed and dispirited, and the Russians successful in every quarter. Kutusoff defeated an united force of Turks and Tartars at Badaba; Prince Repnin, at the head of forty thousand men, routed a hundred thousand, led by the Vizier Youssuff, while Goudowitz gained the fortresses of Sondjonk-Kalé and Anapa, on the frontiers of the Crimea and Kuban. Conferences for peace were opened at Jassi; and the Ottomans, in despair, were prepared to receive the dictates of their enemy as a gracious boon. To conduct this negotiation, Prince Potemkin repaired to the place of conference; but this all-powerful favourite, who had been eminently instrumental in making the war, did not live to conclude the peace. At Jassi, he was attacked with an epidemic fever; his habits of intemperance led him to disobey the injunctions of his physicians restraining him from the luxuries of the table. His malady increasing, he fondly hoped to derive vigour from the air of Nicholaff, a village which he had established, at the confluence of the Ingoul and the Bog. He had travelled but a few miles, when illness obliged him to leave his carriage, and the man whose influence could unsettle the affairs of nations, whose insolence was equal to his power, and whose property amounted to nearly forty millions of rubles (£6,000,000), breathed his last like a houseless wanderer, under the covering of heaven, sheltered only by a tree. A suspicion was entertained that his end was accelerated by poison; but the examination of his body afforded no confirmation of the conjecture; nor, considering the course of living alluded to, is it necessary to imagine that the work of fate was forwarded by human wickedness. He was interred at Cherson, and the Empress bestowed a hundred thousand rubles (£16,250) on his monument*.
Against the Turks.	
1791. May.	
July.	
Treaty for peace.	
Death of Potemkin.	

Jacques Rousseau, intitled " *Considerations sur le Gouvernement de Pologne* ;" a treatise which displays great knowledge, and exhibits few, if any, exaggerated notions. See *Œuvres de J. J. Rousseau*, edit. de Bélin, Paris, 1817. tom. iii. p. 521.

* On this whole matter, see *Histoire de trois démembrements*, tome iii. c. 10 and 11; and for an able, ample view of the affairs of Poland, Rivington's *Ann. Reg.* 1792, c. 1, 2, 3, 4; also Lacretelle, tom. viii. p. 168.

A treaty of peace was speedily arranged. Catherine, anxious to turn her forces toward Poland, advanced no new claims against the Turks, but offered the same terms which Potemkin had proposed before the opening of the campaign. A congress of the allied and the belligerent powers, under the mediation of Count Boulstorff, the Danish minister, was held, first at Szistowe, afterward at Galatza; and, at last, preliminaries were signed by Prince Repnin and the grand Vizier Youssuff: they were formed into a definitive treaty, by which Russia retained Ockzakow and the whole country between the Bog and the Nieper, with free navigation of the river*.

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Treaty concluded.

August 11.

The progress of these events did not contribute to render the situation of Mr. Fawkeners at the court of Petersburg easy or satisfactory; but all the circumstances attending his mission are not yet developed with such clearness and consistency as to afford materials for an indisputable narrative. One author† says, that the British envoy brought to the Russian court two sets of proposals, one of more, the other of less exaction; that Catherine, either divining or apprised of this fact, managed, by affected shews of regard and civility, so effectually to cajole him, that he never opened to her any but his most conciliatory instructions. In this statement there is some mistake, arising, probably, from the circumstance, imperfectly known or incorrectly understood by the author, that Mr. Pitt, when he found his intentions respecting Russia less strongly supported in the House of Commons than he expected, dispatched a messenger to Petersburg, who

Situation of
Mr. Fawkeners.

* Castéra, tom. iii. p. 106. Histoire des trois démembrements de la Pologne, tom. iii. p. 133.—For a short, but interesting account of the provinces of Wallachia and Moldavia, see Eton's Survey, p. 306. Castéra, tom. iii, p. 103, thus sums up the losses of all parties. In the war which was terminated by this treaty, Austria lost 130,000 soldiers, and expended three hundred millions of florins (£30,000,000). Russia lost two hundred thousand men, five ships of the line, seven frigates, and four-score smaller vessels, and expended two hundred millions of rubles (£32,500,000). The loss of the Turks was three hundred and thirty thousand men, six ships of the line, four frigates, and many smaller vessels; and their expense amounted to two hundred and fifty million of piastres (£70,000,000). Sweden expended seventy millions of rix-dollars (£16,000,000), and lost twelve ships of the line, three frigates, and forty smaller vessels of war. Probably this account is exaggerated.

† Castéra, tom. iii. p. 102.

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Arrival of Mr.
Adair.

arrived in time to prevent the delivery of a stern and lofty requisition, which had been forwarded, and to substitute one of a more mild description*.

Mr. Fawkener's situation was rendered difficult, and his prospects unpromising, by an event of a very peculiar description. Soon after he reached the Russian capital, Mr. Adair, a gentleman allied by blood, and intimately connected in politics with Mr. Fox, also arrived. The envoy of government soon found, on many occasions, himself slighted, and (although not to such a degree as would warrant diplomatic notice) insulted in public.

Behaviour of
the Empress.

When the progress of her arms left her no doubt of her ultimate success, Catherine, tauntingly, said to Mr. Fawkener, "Well, Sir, if Mr. Pitt is determined to expel me from Petersburg, I hope, at last, he will allow me to take refuge at Constantinople." She even contemplated a grand and daring project, in which she would have been assisted by French advice and French officers,—that of marching an army through Bochara and Cashmere, to enthrone the Mogul and expel the English from India. Justly to apprehend the practicability of this project, it should be recollected that, at the time of its formation, the victories of Earl Cornwallis had not yet freed the British government from its most powerful and determined enemy, and that our allies in that peninsula might, probably, have been detached from their fidelity by the prospect of engaging in a national cause†. The course of political events changed all the views of Catherine with respect to England, and frustrated many hopes which had been founded on the prospect of a struggle between two such nations. Yet so elated was she at the failure of Mr. Pitt's projects, that she shewed her gratitude for the services of Mr. Fox by placing his bust in her cabinet, between those of Demosthenes and Cicero‡.

* Tomline's Life of Pitt, vol. ii. p. 208.—Rivington's Ann. Reg. vol. xxxiii. p. 202.

† Ann. Reg. 1791.—Castéra, tom. iii. p. 100.—Eton's Survey of the Turkish Empire, p. 437.

‡ Moore's Life of Sheridan, vol. ii. p. 134, where her Imperial Majesty's letter, directing her ambassador to order the bust, is given verbatim.

Mr. Adair's conduct, on this occasion, has given rise to a controversy which cannot be deemed unimportant.

Mr. Burke asserted, in a private letter to the Duke of Portland, written in 1793, that " Mr. Fox, without the knowledge or participation of any one person in the House of Commons, with whom he was bound by every party-principle, in matters of delicacy and importance confidentially to communicate, thought proper to send Mr. Adair as his representative, and with his cypher, to St. Petersburg, there to frustrate the objects for which the minister from the crown was authorized to treat. He succeeded in this his design, and did actually frustrate the King's minister's in some of the objects of his negotiation*." This letter was not intended for publication; but a copy, having been stolen from Mr. Burke's study by a person whom he employed as amanuensis†, was fraudulently, and without the author's consent, delivered to a bookseller, and printed in 1797. An injunction from the Court of Chancery checked its general dissemination; but, as it had been too much circulated to be concealed, the author corrected a copy, and it was committed fairly to the press.

Following the information afforded by this pamphlet, the Bishop of Winchester inserted the statement in his Memoirs of Mr. Pitt, with the addition, that he found its accuracy attested by authenticated documents among Mr. Pitt's papers, and that he was not aware of any attempt having been made by Mr. Fox or his friends to controvert the facts or invalidate the reasoning of Mr. Burke‡.

In making his communication to the Duke of Portland, Mr. Burke could not be charged with the violation of any political confidence; that tie between Mr. Fox and him had been severed before the occasion could arise; and although Mr. Burke spoke and voted with the leader of opposition on the question of the armament, yet their contact in general was so frail and

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Observations
on the conduct
of Mr. Adair.
By Mr.
Burke.

Repeated by
the Bishop of
Winchester.

Observations
on Mr. Burke's
statement.

* Burke's Works, vol. viii. 8vo.

† The name of this person was Swift; Mr. Burke had rescued him from abject poverty. Prior's Life of Burke, vol. ii. p. 229.

‡ Life of Pitt, vol. ii. p. 447.

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feeble, that a piece of witty malice, or of zealous indiscretion, on the part of Mr. Fox, even in those debates, occasioned a disuniting explosion*. But if these circumstances redeem the character of Mr. Burke from the imputation of treachery, they take from his disclosure much of its reputation for authenticity. That which had not been communicated to him from the highest authority, he could not be said to know: it might have been suggested by persons whom he thought he could believe, or his own sagacity, aided by facts generally known, might have led him to discover the train of politics pursued by his late friend: he may even have been right in all that he advanced; but the validity of his assertions is impaired by his want of precise information.

Mr. Adair's
letters on the
subject.

Great discussion prevailed at the time of the surreptitious publication; and statements concerning the transactions in Russia were made by different writers, which were not contradicted or impugned, until thirty years after the event, when the Bishop of Winchester published a portion of the Memoirs of Mr. Pitt. Mr. Adair then addressed a letter to that prelate†, complaining of the assertions which had so long been current, and particularly of the confirmatory expressions used by the Bishop, and requesting his lordship to correct, publicly, explicitly, and immediately, the parts in his work which were pointed out as errors of fact. In ten days the Bishop wrote an answer‡, which being unsatisfactory to Mr. Adair, he published it, with his own former epistle, and his reply, in a pamphlet. He averred that Mr. Fox did not send him to Russia, although he knew of his intention, and did not attempt to dissuade him; that his purpose in going was not to frustrate the King's ministers; but that his anxiety, on public grounds, to see the issue of a question so important, was strengthened by a personal motive. During the King's illness, Mr. Fox signified his intention to employ him in the diplomatic department; and, no other appointment having occurred, he had gone to Petersburg. Declining to state by what

His pamphlet.

* See p. 14.

† May 23, 1821.

‡ June 2nd.

means he obtained a knowledge of events as they were passing, or to name or designate the persons with whom he conversed, and “discussed, with the accustomed openness and freedom of an Englishman, but “with no secret view whatever, both the causes and the “consequences of the measures then in agitation,” he admits that he freely gave his opinion on all these matters; opinions which were in conformity with those felt and declared by the country, by the House of Commons, by Mr. Fox, and by Mr. Burke himself. It is true, likewise, he says, that, in a letter which he wrote, when all was over, to Mr. Fox, he expressed much exultation at a result which, had it been different, would, he believed, have made Catherine “an enemy, more formidable than, a few years “afterwards, we found her unfortunate son to be.”

He denied having frustrated any object of the King’s ministers; in fact, the object of the armament was given up immediately after the first debate in the House of Commons. In direct contradiction to the Bishop, he affirmed that Mr. Fox had denied the charge, as much as any charge can be denied before it is stated, by a challenge to inquire into it. Every one of the rumours collected and concentrated by Mr. Burke in 1793, was notoriously in circulation in 1792, when Parliament met. There was, indeed, some vague hint, from Mr. Pitt, of inquiring into the transaction at a future day; and the writer well remembered Mr. Dundas’s sarcastic allusion to the rumours, and Mr. Fox’s instant reply, containing a direct challenge to inquire into their truth. It were absurd, he said, to suppose that Mr. Fox would have called for inquiry into facts which he was not prepared either to deny if criminal, or to justify if harmless. Nor was it true that none of Mr. Fox’s friends denied the facts; for, immediately after the appearance of the spurious pamphlet, one of them had published, in the *Morning Chronicle**, a letter, signed with his name, and concluding with these words:—“If any better sentiment

* Feb. 14, 1797. See this letter at length in Mr. Adair’s two letters to the Bishop of Winchester, p. 62.

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“ than curiosity can be gratified by my justification, I
“ am ready to enter upon it without delay. It is
“ enough for me, in the mean time, to affirm that the
“ charge is false.” Lastly, Mr. Adair denying the
assertion that no attempt was ever made to invalidate
Mr. Burke’s reasoning, referred to the period of Mr.
Fox’s death, nine years after the pamphlet had ap-
peared, observing that Dr. Parr collected and published
a variety of well-written characters of Mr. Fox, toge-
ther with one drawn up by his own powerful hand.
All the reasoning of Mr. Burke, he says, is, in this
publication, met and confuted in a manner that admits
of no answer. It is a complete dissection of Mr. Burke’s
charge ; its flimsy texture torn to rags, and all his fal-
lacies dispersed and annihilated.

The Bishop, in answering this letter, referred first
to an advertisement prefixed to the complete edition
of Mr. Burke’s works*, in which appears a letter to
Dr. Laurence, and a statement that the paper origi-
nally sent to the Duke of Portland was entirely con-
fidential : far from intending, as Mr. Adair had sup-
posed, that it should slide gradually into the press, the
author had not kept so much as one clean copy ; but
he disclaimed nothing but the mere act and intention
of publishing ; not retracting any one of the sentiments
he had expressed. The letter had been written in
a tone of indignation, in consequence of certain reso-
lutions of the Whig Club, which had occasioned the
secession of himself and some other members. And,
the Bishop added, it would then appear that the pam-
phlet had been corrected and republished by its author,
some time after Mr. Adair’s letter in the Morning
Chronicle. After some observations on the corre-
spondence which Mr. Adair admits himself to have
had with Mr. Fox in cypher, and the free and open
discussions on the measures in agitation, the obvious
remark occurs, that as he does not mention who those
persons were, they must have been the Empress’s
ministers, or individuals in their confidence. His Lord-

* Published at least eighteen years before the work of the Bishop. The 8vo. edition is 1803, and before it there had been one in 4to.

ship also said, that when Mr. Pitt talked of Parliamentary inquiry, it was impossible for Mr. Fox to do less than declare his readiness to meet it; but this was no proof that the charge was groundless. To establish, by regular proof, the truth of a transaction, alleged to have taken place between a private individual and the sovereign and ministers of a foreign and distant country, a transaction in which both parties would unquestionably withhold all information, must obviously be extremely difficult, if not absolutely impossible; and yet circumstances might leave no doubt in the minds of the impartial on the reality or the effects of the transaction. A person avowedly of the party acting in opposition to the English government, would not have been very likely to meet with a favourable and confidential reception from the Empress, if she had been really desirous of a friendly connexion. In truth, she saw in Mr. Pitt a great obstacle to her ambitious projects, and therefore shewed a predilection for Mr. Fox and his friends. In his communication with the newspaper, Mr. Adair merely affirmed that the charge was false; without explaining the nature of the charge, or pointing out in what respect it was so. On the subject of Dr. Parr, the Bishop contents himself with quoting from his publication these words:—"I am not enough acquainted with the circumstances of this transaction either to justify or condemn the whole of it."

On receiving this letter, Mr. Adair transmitted it and his former epistle to the press, with the addition of a somewhat long reply, or rather a copy of a letter which, before writing that already mentioned, he had prepared, enlarged only by adverting to some topics treated on, and some arguments adduced by the Bishop. It could not advance much new matter; for the writer says that his former letter contained, in substance, all he had to tell. His chief aim is to prove that better terms could not have been obtained from the Empress, had he not been at Petersburg.

On all points where he makes positive and direct assertions, Mr. Adair, as a gentleman, has a right to

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expect belief from the reader ; but it is much to be regretted that such assertions are so few as to leave the general narrative of Mr. Burke nearly untouched. He says he did not reach Petersburg till many days after Mr. Fawkeners ; but does not say how many. To have been there before the missionary of government, or even before he had obtained an audience of the Empress, would probably have occasioned a degree of caution which would have frustrated his intentions ; but if it be true that he was engaged in an adverse embassy, it may well be supposed that, during his short residence (and he does not say how long it was) at Vienna and at Moscow, or at some place between them, he would receive information which would enable him judiciously to time his appearance at Petersburg. Readers who are not entirely satisfied with this explanation, may not, perhaps, consider the general disavowal of preconcert with Mr. Fox much strengthened by the acknowledgment that a cypher had been arranged between them, or by the question —“ After all, what is a cypher but a sign ? In what “ does the use of it differ from that of a foreign language before an obtrusive or an indiscreet listener, “ happily ignorant of that language* ?” Mr. Adair censures the word contempt, as used by the Bishop in describing the behaviour of the Empress toward Mr. Fawkeners ; and, so far as relates to the person and qualities of Mr. Fawkeners, nothing can be more just ; but as the account already referred to of her conduct toward him and Mr. Adair had been published twenty-six years†, with the strong assertion that in public audiences she always contrived to give the station of honour at her right hand to Mr. Adair, and not to the minister of government, with the addition, that, at the conclusion of the peace, she gave presents exactly of the same kind to both, but of greater value, and with some additional articles, to the representative of Mr. Fox,—when these facts had been so long asserted, it is somewhat remarkable that, if denials or explanations

* P. 37.

† Rivington's Annual Register, 1791, p. 203 ; published in 1795.

were deemed necessary, they were not more direct, or more satisfactory. It can hardly be expected that this digression should be lengthened by a comparison between the arguments of Mr. Burke and the refutation of Dr. Parr. Whether the learned compiler of eulogies on Mr. Fox, from newspapers and magazines, with notes and additions of his own, has or has not dissected and torn to rags the flimsy texture of Mr. Burke's charge, Mr. Adair has kindly given his readers, who do not possess Dr. Parr's volumes, the means of deciding, by copying into his pamphlet the substance of his reasoning*.

But, while it was attempted to answer this charge, it might have been well to notice one, much more authoritatively urged, by a gentleman who was himself at Petersburg during the time, and who, after detailing many facts, says—"After the fleet was fitted out, and the object declared, it became the dignity of the nation to have let it sail; and if Mr. Fawkener was to be sent, he should have gone with it. The friends of Mr. Fox pride themselves much in having prevented the fleet's sailing; but let them be ever silent on the partition of Poland; for their measures undoubtedly occasioned it†."

Observations
of Mr. Eton.

* P. 72. See also Characters of the late C. J. Fox, selected and partly written by Philopatris Varvicensis, vol. i. p. 239 to 248.

† "Since this was written, the Empress is dead, and I have no scruple now of declaring that that unfortunate monarch (the King of Poland) accuses them of it; and there are those in England who can produce proofs of what I affirm."—Note by Mr. Eton. Survey of the Turkish Empire, published in 1799, p. 406.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTY-THIRD.

1791—1792.

Affairs of France—Decline of royal authority.—Insults offered to the Royal Family.—Plans of escape—difficulties—spies—inconsiderate conduct of the Queen.—Montmedi fixed on. Escape of the Royal Family—they reach Varennes—are known—arrested—and escorted toward Paris.—Proceedings in the Assembly.—Lafayette and Bailly ordered to the bar.—the King's declaration—answer.—Hopes of the Duke of Orléans.—Republican party.—Alarm of the moderate party.—Efforts of the Republicans.—Effect of the King's arrest.—Progress of the Royal Family—they arrive—are placed under a guard.—The King's authority suspended—his conduct referred to a committee.—Treatment of the Royal Family.—Report of the Committee.—Agitation in Paris.—Meeting at the Champ de Mars.—Martial law proclaimed.—Error of Lafayette.—Proceedings of the Assembly—its last acts.—The constitution—presented to the King—accepted.—Dissolution of the Assembly.—Feelings of continental powers.—The emigrants.—Condition of Louis—his letters to foreign courts.—Conference at Mantua.—Declaration at Pavia.—Pretended treaty.—Conference at Pilnitz.—Declaration of the Sovereign—its effect.—Letter of the Princes.—Conduct of foreign courts respecting the constitution.—Mistake concerning France.—Formation of the Legislative Assembly.—Republicans.—The Mountain. Parties out of the Assembly.—Duke of Orléans—Petion. Clubs—the Feuillants.—Journals.—Sitting of the Assembly. The King goes to take the oaths.—Laws against emigrants—against Monsieur—the King refuses the sanction—his proclamation—and letter.—Answer of the Princes.—Observations in the Assembly.—Decrees against the clergy—the

King's sanction refused.—Other decrees.—Massacre at Avignon.—Conduct of the Assembly.—Insurrection at St. Domingo.—Depression of assignats.—Eagerness for war. State of ministers—efforts to change them.—Robespierre's party.—Motives for desiring war.—The Brissotines.—Madame Roland.—Moderate party.—Conduct of the Emperor. Dispatch from Prince Kaunitz—communicated to the Assembly.—The emigrants expelled from Treves.—Attacks on the Emperor.—Conduct of Prussia.—Pacific views of Leopold.—His death.—Feelings of the Empress of Russia and King of Sweden.—Murder of Gustavus.—Change of ministry.—Jacobin administration.—War with Germany.

NOT without abundant reason did Mirabeau, in his last illness, if not in his last moments, deplore the French monarchy, which with him would descend to the grave. Knowing of whom they were composed, and acquainted with their sentiments and yet undisclosed intentions, he saw the certain ascendancy of those factions which, rising on the ruins of royalty, would make a prey of the country. Mirabeau is one of those instances, so often found in history, of men who, setting in motion the tremendous force of the multitude, stand appalled at the rapid, overwhelming, irresistible force with which it rushes forward, and, anxious to prevent the overthrow of all that is valuable in society, strive, when it is too late, to restrain the violence they have excited, to controul the power they have created. Mirabeau alone could have achieved, even in part, the great objects which animated his last endeavours. Others, wanting his sway with the King and Queen, his commanding eloquence, his great popularity, and his accurate knowledge of the number, the views, the talents, and the vices, of the opposing factions, could only make hesitant attempts, and incur destructive failures.

After the obstruction of his journey to Saint Cloud, Louis was merely a prisoner, and the Tuileries his gaol. Daily insults were offered to him and all his family; decrees of the Assembly and clamours of the

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Plans of
escape.

Difficulties.

Spies.

Montmedi
fixed on.

Situation of
M. de Bouillé.

Delays.
June 19.

20th.
Escape of the
Royal Family.

mob alike invaded his tranquillity; the momentary popularity gained by his degrading letter quickly vanished, and was replaced by bitter hatred and undisguised contempt. His friends, wanting the influence of a predominating genius, proposed and prosecuted undefined and ill-concocted plans; while his own uncertain and vacillating temper weakened or frustrated every measure suggested for his benefit. An escape from Paris was desirable and necessary; and he determined wisely in electing to go to the frontier only, and not out of his dominions; conscious that a king, under such circumstances, if he meets compassion, cannot avoid contempt, and that it is inconsistent with majesty to appear in foreign courts as a suppliant or dependent. Among the numerous plans which were presented, that which was finally adopted rested chiefly on the co-operation of the Marquis de Bouillé. To its accomplishment, every day added new difficulties. The Royal Family were beset with spies, who reported to the Commune every act, however apparently unimportant. Removals of individuals from the palace, and preparations of dresses inconsiderately ordered by the Queen, with many contrivances which were resorted to for concealment, tended to excite suspicion and point curiosity*.

Montmedi, a strong position on the borders of Champagne, near the unassailable fortress of Luxembourg, was fixed on as the place of refuge. The route by Chalons, Clermont, and Varennes, was finally fixed on, lest, by leaving the kingdom even for a day, the King should incur the forfeiture of the crown. M. de Bouillé, governor of Metz, had projected an advance of troops, to protect the escape; but the ruling powers had removed from him those regiments in which he could most confide; and his good intentions were frustrated by changes and delay, occasioned by trifling circumstances.

In the dead of night this ill-omened and fatal journey was begun. Many reasons existed, even at its

* Mémoires sur la Vie de Marie Antoinette, par Madame Campan, tome ii. p. 13 et seqq.

commencement, for believing that precaution had not produced concealment, nor had the disguise of persons deceived the eye of scrutiny. The care taken by M. de Bouillé to place a military force at given stations, for protection of the fugitives, was rendered ineffectual by their not reaching the spots indicated until several hours after the time appointed, when the troops had retired. To insure accurate knowledge, the journey had been performed, and the time from stage to stage exactly noted, by a confidential person, and arrangements formed accordingly; but it was not considered that he travelled alone, in a post-chaise, without incumbrance, and no allowance was made for a large party, a weighty vehicle, heavily laden, numerous horses, a courier, and other attendants, all of which contributed to retard the journey and falsify calculation. Most just is the observation, that it was unfortunate for the descendant of Henry the Fourth, that, being brought up in the Castle of Versailles, he was prevented from possessing his ancestor's liveliness of observation, presence of mind, alertness, vigour, and boldness, which were the happy results of a youth trained amidst necessities and dangers*.

After many disappointments, the travellers arrived at Varennes. In passing through St. Menehoud, the King was seen and recognized by Drouet, the post-master. Under his influence, the municipality of Clermont resisted the progress of the cavalry which had been sent by M. de Bouillé, and who yielded very readily to the civil power. When his Majesty reached Varennes, he found further progress impossible. Under pretence that their passports were to be inspected, the royal party were conducted to the house of the Mayor, where it soon became evident that they were prisoners; the very hussars, who had been sent by M. de Brouillé to protect them, answering an appeal on behalf of the King with shouts of "Vive la nation!" Had M. de Bouillé attempted a rescue, he must have sacrificed his troops and lost his life. Ten thousand national guards accompanied the carriage; and as they

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They reach
Varennes.

21st.
Are known,

and arrested.

The King es-
corted toward
Paris.

* Laetecelle, tome viii. p. 253.

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Indignities.

were principally on foot, and their progress slow, the captives endured protracted misery and degrading indignities, not only from the unrestrained execrations and abuse of the mob without, but from the brutality and coarseness of the companions whom, by compulsion, they received within their carriage; and, within their sight, M. de Dampierre, an old gentleman of Champagne, was murdered; and a priest nearly underwent the same fate, merely for having approached their carriage with some marks of respect.

Feelings in
Paris.Proceedings
of the Assem-
bly.Lafayette and
Bailly ordered
to the bar.
5th.
The King's
declaration.
Answer.

When the escape of the royal fugitives became known, Paris exhibited a scene of consternation and confusion. On the meeting of the Assembly, couriers were sent in every direction to stop all travellers intending to leave the kingdom: Lafayette, having peculiar information, had already dispatched his aid-de-camp, M. Romeuf, in the route which the King had taken; but he was stopped by the populace, and the General himself seized and menaced with the lamp-iron. He and Bailly were ordered to the bar of the Assembly, to give an account of their conduct. M. de Laporte presented a declaration, addressed by Louis to the people of France, and placed in his hands by the King's order. The Assembly answered it by a proclamation*; measures were taken for securing the tranquillity of the city, and declarations and promises of fidelity to the constitution flowed in from many quarters.

Hopes of the
Duke of
Orléans.Republican
party.

As Monsieur had effected his escape in a different direction from the King, and as the Comte d'Artois was already an emigrant, a declared destitution of the King would have crowned the guilty hopes of the Duke of Orléans; but an unforeseen obstacle had arisen, in the formation of a republican party, adverse to the rule of any king, a party which, although neither numerous nor respectable at first, was to be feared, from the state of the public mind, and the difficulty which any man, seeking popularity, would en-

* See the papers faithfully given in Rivington's Annual Register for 1791, p. 217; in Bertrand's Annals, vol. iv. p. 108 of the Appendix; and in Lacretelle, tome viii. p. 369. In other publications, both French and English, it has been thought proper to mutilate and falsify them.

counter in opposing a system in support of which so many acts and declarations of his own could be ad-duced. While the King's arrest was unknown, some leading members of the Assembly sought conferences with the royalists, to suggest measures of conciliation*; but parties without doors, and particularly the new-formed republican faction, were actively employed in procuring demonstrations favourable to their views. The shops were generally shut; a band paraded the streets, throwing down and trampling under foot all signs of the King and Queen, and all emblems of royalty; and many other acts of energy and of frivolity marked the spirit and character of the people.

On receipt of intelligence from Varennes, doubt and irresolution yielded to exultation; and, in the heat of triumph, all means were devised to render the return of the prisoners humiliating and their disgrace bitter. Latour Maubourg, Petion, and Barnave, distinguished in the Assembly by their opposition to the Court, and M. Dumas, adjutant-general of the national guard, were deputed to escort them to Paris. When their near approach was announced, it was decreed that the King, Queen, and Dauphin, should be separately guarded in their apartments, and their declarations taken without delay, to serve as a basis for further proceedings; and, in the mean time, the ministers were to fix the seal to decrees without the King's concurrence. After a most miserable journey, in which the coarseness and brutality of Petion were particularly conspicuous, they were met at Meaux by a large detachment of national guards from Paris, and at noon-day were conducted in gloomy triumph, at a foot's pace, through the whole length of the city: the people were commanded to observe a profound silence, and forbidden to take off their hats. The approaches to the palace were beset by a furious mob, who, with dreadful execrations, menaced the lives of the Queen and of the gardes du corps; and the execution of whose malignant intentions was with difficulty prevented by Barnave and some other members of the

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Alarm of the moderate party.
Efforts of the Republicans.

23rd.
Effect of the King's arrest.

25th.
Decrees.

Progress of the Royal Family.

Arrival in Paris.

* Weber's Memoirs relating to Marie Antoinette, vol. ii. p. 387.

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Placed under
a guard.The King's
authority sus-
pended.His conduct
referred to a
committee.
Republican
party.

legislature. The Royal Family, according to a decree of the Assembly, were confined separately, and the Commandant-general of the national guard made answerable for their persons. Those who had accompanied them were put under arrest, and all were to be examined. The King was provisionally suspended from the functions of royalty.

When the required declarations had been taken, and referred to committees, great exertions were made by the Republicans to obtain a decree, not merely declaring the forfeiture of the throne by Louis, but the total abolition of royalty. Before the King's flight, this proposition had been avowed by Robespierre and Danton, by Condorcet and Brissot; it was the theme of declamation at the clubs of Jacobins and Cordeliers; it was chalked on the walls, and formed the subject of many pamphlets and the heading of innumerable placards. An incendiary writer had published a plan of a decree that the nation should suppress, abolish, and for ever annul, the titles of King, Queen, and Prince of the Blood, as words no longer to have a meaning in the French language. The only chief of the state should be the president of the National Assembly, who was to be elected but for one month, and not more than once in his life. Throne, sceptre, diadem, crown, royal circlet, and royal robe, all those baubles of a puerile vanity were to be deposited in the national wardrobe, to exhibit to posterity the too long infancy of their ancestors*. Condorcet, Brissot, and Thomas Paine, united in publishing a paper called *Le Republicain*; but only two numbers appeared†. Many who had promoted the revolution, in hopes of seeing the Duke of Orléans regent or king, felt the improbability that ever he would engage with spirit in any enterprise which required personal courage; and many more discerned that, even if he stood in the place of Louis, their hopes of advantage would not be forwarded.

* Prudhomme, *Révolutions de Paris*, No. 90, du 20 Mars, au 2 Avril, 1791. *Mémoires biographiques de Mirabeau*, tome ii. p. 152.

† Appeal to Impartial Posterity, by Madame Roland, vol. i. p. 58; and *Histoire de la Conjuration du Duc d'Orléans*, tome iii. p. 130.

These, of course, lent themselves readily to the project of a republic, and an agrarian law.

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In their new captivity, the Royal Family experienced additional hardships and insults. Lafayette, alarmed at the risk he had once incurred, or anxious to retrieve his popularity, enforced, in all its rigour, the decree of the Legislature, and assumed, with the office, the manners of a gaoler. Without describing in all its instances the low malevolence by which the Queen was rendered miserable, the violations of decency which were practised and authorized, and the mean insolence which limited her power of seeing any ladies, or even female attendants, except one, known to be treacherous and disagreeable to her, it may suffice to say, that such was the operation of grief on her constitution, that in one night her hair lost its natural colour, and became white as that of a woman of seventy*. A numerous guard was stationed in the courts, and a camp pitched in the garden, with all military equipments. The public, and even the deputies of the Assembly, were excluded; Lafayette pretending that, in order to shut out the sections, whose irruptions would be terrible, he must also exclude the deputies, whose visits were useless. Centinels were placed upon the very roof of the palace.

1791.
Treatment of
the Royal
Family.

While the committees were preparing their report, the question whether the King should be put on his trial occupied all conversation; and all the debates in the Assembly, although on other subjects, were so conducted as to shew that this was the topic which chiefly, if not solely, engaged the thoughts of the members. The reports of the committees, presented by Muguet de Nanthou, ascribed the blame of the late event to M. de Bouillé†, and declared that reason, as well as

Report of the
committees.

July 13th.

* Mémoires de Madame Campan, tome ii. p. 137; Weber's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 400 et seqq.

† M. de Bouillé had written to the Assembly, avowing himself the sole author of the plan of escape. If this generous acknowledgment had a tendency beneficial to the Royal Family, the effect was destroyed by threats contained in the letter, against the Assembly, the country, and the capital, if the King were put on his trial. Such menaces did not intimidate; they were received with disdain and contemptuous laughter within the walls; but, without, formed the foundation of many invectives against the Royalists, and against the Royal Family. The letter appears in the periodical publications, and in Lacroix, tome viii. p. 405.

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16th.

the constitution, opposed bringing the King to a trial. It was fiercely debated during two days; and, after many sanguinary petitions had been presented, and corresponding speeches delivered by Robespierre, Pétion, Prieur, and Rewbell, a decree was adopted, providing that, if the King, after having sworn to the constitution, should retract, or if he should put himself at the head of a military force, or direct his generals to act against the nation, or forbear to oppose any such attempt by an authentic act, he should be judged to have abdicated the throne, and be considered as a simple citizen, subject to impeachment in the ordinary forms for all crimes committed after his abdication*.

Agitation in
Paris.

This termination was extremely mortifying to the republican party. Tallien framed a furious petition, signed "The People," admonishing the Assembly that their duty was to give a constitution to their country, but not to fix on the throne a traitor, perjured in his most sacred oaths. The Jacobins and the Cordeliers, and a club composed of revolutionary females, declared that, notwithstanding the decree, they would no longer acknowledge Louis for their king, and threatened vengeance on every one who should shew toward him the slightest sign of obedience; and, in the name of the people, they shut up all the theatres. On the following day, they formed arrangements for an assemblage in the field of the Confederation, before called the Champ de Mars, where a hundred thousand men would declare their resolution not to acknowledge a perjured sovereign. The light of that day, they said, should be the last the traitors should ever behold.

16th.

17th
Meeting at the
Champ de
Mars.

In the Assembly, orders had been given for counteracting this seditious meeting. At the peep of day, two bodies, the one followers of Brissot, the other of Robespierre, drew toward the prescribed spot, the altar of the country. The first were not numerous, but

* For the facts here related, see *Memoirs of the Marquis de Bouillé*, p. 328, et seqq.; *Bertrand's Annals*, vol. iv. p. 41, 42; *Mémoires de Madame Campan*, tome ii. c. 18; *Weber's Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 297, et seqq.; *Narratives by the Duchess of Angoulême* and by Monsieur, afterward Louis the Eighteenth; *Dumont, Souvenirs de Mirabeau*, etc. c. 16; *Lacretelle*, tome viii. p. 244, et seqq.; and all the Histories. And, for some remarks on the mode of conduct which should have been pursued, *Montholon*, iii. p. 1.

tolerably well dressed, and affecting a Roman severity ; the latter were in immense numbers, and composed of all that is savage and squalid in the French capital. The altar of the country was wetted with the blood of human victims. Two invalids, who had crept under the steps to gratify a foolish curiosity, were seized as agents in a plot to blow up the place with gunpowder ; and, although they declared their real purpose, and neither on their persons nor in the place was there a single grain of gunpowder, sentence of death was pronounced : they were miserably hacked with swords, and their heads, in the usual style of revolutionary pomp, were placed on pikes and paraded about the town. After this auspicious beginning, the petition was produced, by which the subscribers, after reciting, in very abusive terms, all the crimes imputed to the King, formally required the Assembly to record his abdication, and provide a constitutional substitute. As this petition did not speak of the abolition of royalty, or the establishment of a republic, but opened prospects to those who might wish to succeed to regal power, it was believed to be the composition of La Clos*, an active member in the cabinet of the Duke of Orléans ; but yet it obtained numerous signatures.

In a permanent sitting of the Assembly, a murder by the mob was, for the first time, considered a fit subject of animadversion. By their orders, the Mayor proclaimed martial law, and displayed a reg flag from the Hotel de Ville ; the national guard, led by the municipal officers, was received at the Champ de Mars with cries of " down with the red flag ! no bayonets !" and a cloud of missiles was discharged at them. Lafayette, at first, fired with blank cartridges ; a measure which produced its unvarying effect, of encouraging the insurgents and increasing their ferocity. When many soldiers had been wounded, and one slain, he issued the necessary and effective command. The discharge brought down about one hundred men, of whom more than twenty were killed. The place was imme

Martial law
proclaimed.

* Author of a profligate novel, intituled *Les Liaisons dangereuses*.

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Error of La-
fayette.

diately evacuated, and the guilty sought safety in concealment.

Had Lafayette possessed, but in a slight degree, the courage and good sense necessary to his situation, he might now have saved his country. The panic extended not to the mob alone, but to their instigators: Robespierre and others betook themselves to a retirement, from which they did not emerge for some days. In that time the clubs might have been shut up, their papers seized, their ringleaders overawed, and all public authorities placed on a secure foundation: but Lafayette had neither heart nor genius for such things; he shewed his personal courage and indifference to danger; but he could not, as a much greater man did four years afterward, found, on the military suppression of an insurrection, the tranquillity and safety of the capital for many years. He soon had reason to repent his weakness; and Bailly, in his dying moments, was insulted by the remembrance of this, which, if well managed, he might justly have termed a beautiful day. The Assembly approved the conduct of the municipality, and passed a decree against all who should, by placards, advertisements, pamphlets, or speeches, excite, or be accomplices with any who should excite, insurrection, murder, pillage, or disobedience to the law. This decree was followed by no effectual exertions, except the seizure of a few printing presses, and an order to arrest some seditious journalists,, which was never executed. The clubs soon resumed their meetings, the journalists their audacity, and the intriguers their correspondence; and, long before the seventh of August, when the reg flag was removed from the town-house, the massacre of the Champ de Mars was pointed out to execration and vengeance.

18th.
Proceedings of
the Assembly.Last acts of the
Assembly.

Lassitude, terror, the certainty that they had done much evil, and the want of virtue or vigour to repair their errors, accompanied with a sense that they had wearied and disgusted the country, made the Constituent Assembly anxious for their own dissolution. They spent their last days in attempts to correct some of the grosser errors in their constitutional decrees.

A committee was formed to effect this revision* ; and the result of their labours was a code of two hundred and eight articles, rather resembling texts or theses, than laws for regulating a state. It is hardly worth while to describe this preposterous abortion, which was intended for eternity, but never was in full operation, not even in nominal action, a whole year ; but a general outline or abstract may be useful in considering subsequent events, and explaining some allusions.

In the first place, the rights of man were declared, titles, hereditary distinctions, corporations, and religious vows, were abolished, and all men were declared eligible to public places and employments, without any qualifications but those of talents and virtue. The kingdom was declared one and indivisible, and formed into departments ; the sovereignty, one and indivisible, belonged to the nation, which delegated the exercise of it. The government was representative and monarchical. Primary assemblies were instituted, composed of active citizens, that is to say, men twenty-five years of age, paying a direct contribution equivalent to three days' work ; and any one of these, whatever might be his state, profession, or contribution, might be a deputy. Seven hundred and forty-five representatives, chosen by electors named in the primary assemblies, were to form one single chamber ; their duration, two years. To their decrees the King might refuse his sanction ; but the only effect would be to delay their execution for two years : and no sanction was required to decrees which related to the internal regulation of the legislative body, or to public contributions ; nor was the King to dissolve or prorogue them, or to propose a law. The crown was declared hereditary from male to male, in order of primogeniture, to the exclusion of females ; the person of the King was sacred and inviolable ; but if he did not take the oath required within a month after his accession, or if he put himself at the head of an army, and

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Sep. 3—13.
The constitution.

* Their names were Talleyrand and Sieyes, ex-priests ; Petion, Buzot, Target, Briot, Beaumetz, Thouret, Duport the younger, Barnave, Chapelier, and Desmaunier, lawyers,—most of them little known in their courts ; Rabaut de St. Etienne, a Protestant clergyman ; and Alexander Lameth, a private gentleman.

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directed its force against the nation, or if he should not oppose by a formal act any such enterprize undertaken in his name; or if, having gone out of the kingdom, he should not return on the invitation of the legislative body, and within the period fixed by their proclamation; any of these cases should be deemed an abdication, and the King was then to be in the class of citizens, and might be accused and tried like them for acts posterior to his abdication. Provision was made for the revision of constitutional decrees. There were many other enactments in detail, respecting a regency, the civil list, the creation of courts of justice, the appointment of judges, and a great number of internal regulations; and, finally, it was declared that the colonies in Asia, Africa, and America, although they made a part of the French empire, were not included in the constitution*.

Presented to
the King,

and accepted.

18th.

25th.

After many debates, this act was presented to the King, to be accepted or rejected purely and simply; and, to make his sanction appear voluntary, the bonds of his imprisonment were slightly relaxed. A deputation of sixty members attended him; and, as comment or explanation was forbidden, resistance useless, and rejection dangerous, he signed a paper declaring his acceptance. When this was announced, Lafayette obtained a decree that all persons arrested in consequence of the escape should be set at liberty; all legal proceedings relative to the events of the revolution superseded; and the use of passports and temporary restraints discontinued. When the King attended to take the oath, members, instead of paying the accustomed compliment of standing while he spoke, sat down; and great pains were taken to prevent his supposing that he was received with any thing resembling respect. The constitutional act was proclaimed with studied solemnity; and, on the ensuing Sunday, a grand Te Deum was performed in the church of Notre Dame; but no real joy was exhibited, and no satisfaction felt.

* This constitution at length may be seen in Rivington's Ann. Reg. vol. xxxiii. p. *151; in the other Annual Registers and periodical publications; and it is given, with a vehement eulogy, in a book called the French Constitution, with Remarks, by Benjamin Flower.

Soon afterward, the existence of the Assembly terminated. On the day of their last sitting, the King passed from the Hall to his palace amid gloomy silence; the members in general were little noticed; but on the heads of Robespierre and Petion civic crowns were showered, and they were borne in triumph by the people*.

In foreign countries, the proceedings in France were viewed with alarm and anxiety; the state of the Royal Family was considered with pity, not unmixed with indignation; and the wrongs offered to the German princes by the decrees of the Assembly occasioned serious apprehensions in the minds of other sovereigns on the mischiefs likely to result from the diffusion of French principles among their subjects, supported by the influence, the gold, and, when the time should come, the arms of that nation. Vain had been all remonstrances by the German princes, enforced by proceedings of the Diet of Ratisbon; the Assembly had offered pecuniary, the princes declined all but territorial, indemnities; and thus their wrongs remained unredressed, and nearly unnoticed, while the decree of the expiring Assembly, which wrested Avignon and the Venaissin from the Pope, demonstrated that the system of spoliation and aggrandizement, however speciously disclaimed in decrees and proclamations, was, in fact, a predominating principle of the government. Foreign powers had made some efforts toward an union which might save the Royal Family, and insure the general safety; but the want of a common feeling, occasioned by the indulgence of peculiar views and the pursuits of separate interests, prevented the formation of any solid, useful, and well-directed alliance.

Late events had greatly increased the number of emigrants from France; but the augmentation of their influence was not in proportion. The tale of their wrongs and their calamities, however true and affecting, could not always be listened to with renewed atten-

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1791.

30th.
Dissolution of
the Constituent
Assembly.

Feelings of
continental
powers.

Sep. 14.

The emigrants.

* Lacretelle, tome viii. c. 5; Thiers, Histoire de la Révolution, tome i. c. 6, pp. 307 et seqq.; and the Histories in general.

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tion. After the emigration of Monsieur, they obtained, for a time, some appearance of consideration ; but still they were rather a number than a body, composed chiefly of the better classes of society, without those inferiors who really form the strength of greatness ; princes without people ; lords without vassals ; commanders without forces ; they had not, in themselves, the means of supporting dignity, or commanding respect. The angry and peremptory manner in which they spoke of the revolutionary party in France, and their perpetual claim, as mere matter of undisputed right, of privileges and possessions which they had no means of obtaining, either by force or by partial concession, rendered them burthensome to those countries in which they resided, and their complaints fatiguing to those to whom they were addressed. Their oppressors, elated with power and fearless of events, treated them and their declarations with ridicule ; their pecuniary resources were diverted ; poverty beset many of them ; and, as their numbers were increased by frequent additions of priests, who could bring with them no property, but must become a profitless weight on a society already too much encumbered, respect was denied them, and a timid caution made governments reluctant to identify with the body of their subjects a class who might become a serious burthen, but were never likely to form the means of strength, or the source of advantage. Thus were men, highly exalted by birth and extraction, of great talent and unimpeached honour, reduced to a condition which gave them nothing to claim, and left them little to hope.

Condition of
Louis.

Various circumstances in the fortune of Louis occasioned such apparent differences in his determinations, that mere public or ostensibly confidential documents afforded little insight into the real state of his feelings or intentions ; but secret agents were employed in endeavours to induce the powers of the Continent to make efforts, not hostile, but pacific, to procure a melioration of his state. Before the death of Mirabeau, he had written to the Emperor, the Empress of Russia, the Kings of Spain, Prussia, and Sweden, complaining

His letters to
foreign powers
1790.
Dec. 3.

that, although he had accepted the constitutional act, the factions only displayed their intention to destroy the residue of the monarchy, and suggesting a congress of the principal powers of Europe, supported by an armed force, as the measure best calculated to stop the course of faction, afford means for establishing a more eligible order of things, and preventing the evil which prevailed in France from reaching other states*. However the potentates to whom this missive was addressed might have sympathized with the writer, and entered into his views, their own immediate concerns forbad their uniting in any immediate measures: subsequent events, and particularly the ill-advised letter from the King to his ambassadors, prevented them from acting with promptness or decision in his behalf.

Yet the cause of the Sovereign was not abandoned, or purposely neglected. The Emperor Leopold, profoundly grieved at the state to which the King and Queen were reduced, after they had been prevented from going to St. Cloud, received, at Mantua, M. de Calonne and the Count Alexander de Durfort, confidential friends of the Royal Family, and conferred with them on their prospects and hopes. But even the present unhappy position of the Royalists did not produce concord in their sentiments, suppress the selfish views of individual ambition, or restrain the intriguing disposition of courtiers. Before this interview, the Emperor had been informed, by the Baron de Breteuil, the political adversary of M. de Calonne, that the King, fearing their extravagant pretensions, did not wish to owe his safety to the emigrants, and that the Queen had a personal disagreement with the Count d'Artois. The Emperor promised to march thirty-five thousand men into Flanders, and fifteen thousand into Alsace; an equal number of Swiss were to move toward Lyons, a similar body of Piedmontese toward Dauphiny, and that Spain would assemble twenty thousand men; he promised also the co-operation of Prussia and the neutrality of England. It was further arranged that a proclamation should be issued by the

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Conference at
Mantua.

1791.

May 2.
Measures
proposed.

* See this letter at length, *Mémoires d'un Homme d'État*, tome i. p. 94.

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Rejected.

Declaration at
Pavia.May 18.
Pretended
treaty.

sovereigns of the house of Bourbon, the King of Spain, the Infanta of Parma, and all the emigrant princes*; and, lest the Queen should suffer from the fury of the French populace, they were to take the lead, although the Emperor was avowedly the soul of the compact. The parliaments of France were to be restored, as necessary to the re-establishment of forms. This plan was only conditional, and never, in any part, carried into execution; but it can hardly be supposed that the triumphant party in France would have been terrified by a force of a hundred thousand men, scattered on five points of their frontier: it was rejected both by Louis and the Queen: he objected to the assembling of the parliaments in any but a judicial capacity; both concurred in the necessity of quitting Paris, and refused to recall the orders given to M. de Bouillé.

Of this meeting, the particulars were not known until some years after it had taken place: but the Emperor having previously issued a declaration, dated at Pavia, announcing his intention to act in concert with other powers in resisting the designs manifested by the leaders of the French revolution†, malevolence invented, and ignorance received as authentic, a treaty to which the Emperor, the Prince of Nassau, Spain, and Prussia, were parties, stipulating for seizing a large portion of France, with Poland, and several other entire states in Europe, besides colonies, and appropriating them according to the will of the contracting parties. This imaginary compact, unauthenticated by any circumstance, except its appearance in print, and contradicted on the very face of it by evident demonstrations of ignorance and falsehood, formed a subject of vehement declamation to the factious in all countries; it was denied, contradicted, exposed, in vain; the refutation, as in all such cases, was speedily forgotten; while the falsehood, perseveringly reproduced, was always received as fresh, vigorous, and authentic‡.

* *Histoire de la Révolution*, par Thiers, tome i. p. 306; Moore's View, vol. ii. p. 308, et seqq.; Bertrand's Annals, vol. iv. p. 58. See also his Correspondence with Mr. Fox, Annals, vol. ix. p. 56.

† *Mémoires d'un Homme d'État*, tome i. p. 109.

‡ See this pretended treaty, signed Leopold, Prince Nassau, Count Florida Blanca, and Bischofswerder, in Debrett's State Papers, vol. i. p. 1. Also Rivington's Ann. Reg. 1791, p. 204.

This fabrication, founded, no doubt, on conjectures or false reports concerning the conference at Mantua, was supposed to gain support and confirmation from a meeting which took place in the dominions of the Elector of Saxony, at Pilnitz, near Dresden. After the signature of preliminaries between Russia and the Porte, the Emperor and the King of Prussia, finding the necessity of making arrangements, particularly with respect to Poland, which they could not entrust to their ministers, fixed this interview. It was attended by the King and Prince Royal of Prussia, Prince Hohenlohe, Baron Bischofswerder, and Colonel De Stein; they were soon joined by the Emperor, the Archduke Francis, Marshal De Lascy, Baron Spielmann, and Count Palfry; they were guests of the Elector, who received them with respectful hospitality and dignified magnificence. Unexpectedly, the Baron De Rolle presented himself at an entertainment of the Court, and announced the arrival of the Count d'Artois at Dresden. He was accompanied by M. De Calonne, the Marquis de Bouillé, General Flachslan, the Duc de Polignac, and the Prince of Nassau Siegen. Before his arrival, the two sovereigns had amicably arranged the principal matter which occasioned their meeting; but on the subject of France they did not agree in opinion. The Emperor, although urged by his cabinet, was averse to hostilities, wishing to confine himself to manifestoes and menaces; but the King of Prussia, swayed by more lofty sentiments, was inclined for war. The emigrants pressed for vigorous and decisive measures; but the statesmen both of Germany and Prussia felt it impossible that the French nobility should regain all their privileges, the clergy their wealth and authority, or the crown its unrestrained prerogatives. There was yet a medium between revolutionary anarchy and that which a counter-revolution would occasion; and this they hoped to find in a combination of the moderating views of the Emperor with the King of Prussia's schemes of speedy action*. The only result of this meeting, as to France, was a declaration

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Conference at
Pilnitz.

August 24.

Declaration of
the Sovereigns

* *Mémoires d'un Homme d'État*, tome i. p. 146.

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27th.

Its effect.

Sep. 10.
Letter of the
Princes.August 28.
Answers of
courts to the
declaration.

of the two sovereigns, dispatched to the Count d'Artois, that they considered the situation of his King as interesting all sovereigns in Europe, and of their hopes to co-operate in efficacious measures for enabling him to consolidate, in perfect liberty, the basis of a monarchical government, suited to the rights of sovereigns and the welfare of the French people. To obtain this end, their Majesties would act promptly, with mutual concord, and with the necessary forces*.

This declaration, so unimportant in itself, which only exhibited uncertainty and want of energy, gave wild expectations to the royalists, rapidly increased the number of emigrants†, and afforded a theme for much abuse to the prevailing party in Paris‡. Those among them who best understood public affairs, saw in it nothing but vague hopes and undefined promises: the Assembly allowed the King the portion of liberty already noticed; but the amount was so small, that the princes of his family, having no other means of communication, were obliged to publish in the journals an exhortation to him to reject the constitution; a clumsy expedient, which was rendered ridiculous, as well as abortive, by its not appearing until after the King had given his unconditional assent§.

After signing the declaration, the Emperor quitted Pilnitz for Prague, where he was to be crowned. While there, he received answers from Russia, Spain,

* *Mémoires d'un Homme d'État*, tome i. p. 143; *Debrett's State Papers*, vol. i. p. 2. See also *Rivington's Ann. Reg.* 1791, p. 204. *Mémoires de l'Abbé Geogel*, tome iii. p. 440, et seqq.

† *Segur*, F. *Guillaume*, tome ii. p. 191.

‡ *Mémoires de l'Abbé Geogel*, tome iii. p. 443. Many of the absurdities and falsehoods concerning this treaty, which were circulated and believed, were, in 1799, summed up and concentrated by a writer who pretends that all his information is derived from eye-witnesses of the facts, or from their written information, or the contents of their portfolios. Three articles, he says, formed the basis of this treaty. By the first, all republics were to be destroyed; even that of the United States of America was to be replaced under the rule of Great Britain. All the princes of Germany, and all the second and third rate powers, were to be suppressed, and all Europe divided into six great monarchies, to the exclusion of France, the dismemberment of which was irrevocably doomed, as a punishment for a revolution tending to subvert all thrones.—*Mémoires politiques et militaires, pour servir à l'histoire de la révolution française*, tome i. p. 6. But upon the whole transaction, see *Mémoires d'un Homme d'État*, i. p. 101, et seqq.

§ *Mémoires d'un Homme d'État*, tome i. p. 152; tome iii. p. 3 to 14. This letter, in French, and with a corrupted translation, was published as a pamphlet by *Debrett*, 1791.

and the principal states of Italy, entirely conformable to his views; England alone expressed a determination to observe a strict neutrality, although he might be assured of her assistance and co-operation in case of necessity, to oppose a barrier to any dangers with which crowned heads might be menaced through the French revolution.

But, even after the acceptance of the constitution by Louis, several principal states did not consider him sufficiently at liberty to render his assent valid. The Emperor and the King of Prussia received the circular, which was presented by the French ambassador to all courts, with frigid and formal wishes for the happiness of the King and tranquillity of the nation. The King of Spain directed his minister, Count Florida Blanca, to declare that he could not consider the letter transmitted to him to have been written by his most Christian Majesty in a state of moral and physical freedom, and would not receive that or any other writing under the same circumstances*. The Emperor, as if determined to destroy every expectation of his pursuing active measures, addressed to all courts a circular, declaring that he now considered the King of France at perfect liberty, and his acceptance of the constitution and all subsequent acts as absolutely valid; but he added, that if his hopes were disappointed, and should excess of violence or licentiousness again prevail, the powers to whom the King of France had addressed himself would not desist from the measures they had previously concerted, and would hold themselves in readiness to maintain his rights and those of the monarchy. This declaration terminated all hopes of immediate interference; but Russia and Sweden did not accord in it.

All the nations of the continent laboured under a gross and fatal delusion with respect to the French revolution. Misled, partly by over-confident zeal of the emigrants, partly by recent events in other countries, they believed that the invasion of France would

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Their conduct
with respect to
the constitution.

July 6.

Mistakes
concerning
France.

* The answers of the sovereigns, two at length, the rest very briefly abstracted, are in Debrett's State Papers, vol. i. p. 145.

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be a mere military promenade, that resistance, if any, would be but feeble, and success sure and sudden. Brabant, they said, was tranquillized in a fortnight; the counter-revolution in Holland cost but three weeks; and France could not occupy more than two months. Were doubts expressed, or contrary opinions surmised, they who advanced them were considered secret partizans of jacobinism*. Such being the prevailing error, it is not matter of astonishment that the potentates severally pursued their own interests, or yielded to their peculiar jealousies, without forming any consistent plan of combined operation or mutual support; and, from these well-understood facts, it was generally believed that there would be no war on the continent, unless it was commenced by France†.

Self-denying
decree of the
Constituent
Assembly.

By a decree of the first, or, as it is called, Constituent Assembly, no one of its members could be eligible to the next. This has been extolled as a self-denying decree; but it had the effect of withdrawing from the public service all the benefits to be derived from experience, and from tact in argument and business. Their discernment of the errors into which they had fallen could no longer be serviceable; but the efforts which some of them had recently made to arrest, or to bias, the course of revolutionary proceedings, were construed into crime, and they were recorded as offenders, by a tribunal in which they had renounced the opportunity of personal vindication‡.

Formation of
the Legislative
Assembly.

An assembly, characterized by such a system of exclusion, with members so humbly qualified, returned by electors whose franchise was founded on the payment

* Ségur, *Regne de Frédéric Guillaume II.* tom. ii. p. 222.—Castéra gives a striking instance of the prevalence of this error. Among the French officers who assisted in the capture of Ismail, was Count Langeron. With characteristic rudeness, the overbearing favourite, Potemkin, said to him, "Colonel, your countrymen are mad; it would only require my grooms to bring them to their senses." The Count, who, although an emigrant, retained a proper feeling for his country, answered, "Prince, I do not believe that you and all your army could do it." The haughty minion, in anger, threatened him with Siberia, but he escaped into the Austrian camp. In following years, under the government of Alexander, he rose into fame, and obtained honours and distinctions in the state.

† Lacretelle, tom. ix. p. 27.

‡ Dumont *Souvenirs de Mirabeau*, p. 244.

of possibly half a crown a year to the state, could not be expected to be free from the intrusion of mean, illiterate, and degraded persons, likely to forward measures characterized by violence and tending to outrage*.

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In this Assembly was a small party which adopted the principles and sentiments of the loyal cavaliers and faithful clergy in the first; but their numbers were small, their rank comparatively low, and, although their exertions were sincere and honest, they were incumbered with an impracticable constitution, which they were bound to support, as the only chance of retaining a semblance, or even the name of kingly power.

Royalist party.

A republican party, highly favoured by the clubs and the mob, was predominant; but it was in two divisions. The one, afterward so well known by the name of Girondists, was desirous to abolish the state, but not to destroy the life of the king; to form a republic on the basis of liberty and equality, without invading the property of individuals. These visionaries counted in their ranks men of shewy, rather than solid talent; orators, vehement and ornate, but deficient in wisdom and honesty. Among them was Brissot, a man who had travelled, and written books; Condorcet, a marquis, a philosopher, and nearly, if not altogether, an atheist, an inveterate hater, a bad speaker, an acrimonious writer, but a man so soft, so effeminate, and so far below the personal vigour which the pursuit of his schemes required, that one lady compared him to a fine essence absorbed in cotton†, another to a sheep gone mad, and a third to a volcano covered with snow. These two had been projectors of the paper called *Le Republicain*, and avowed their desire to establish in France a federal republic, like that in America. Gen-

Republicans.

Divided.

* This Assembly, it is said, consisted of seven hundred and forty-five members, of whom four hundred were inconsiderable lawyers, practising in the inferior courts; seventy were priests of the class called constitutional; there were as many men of letters or poets without reputation, formerly humble cringers at Versailles, now assiduous courtiers of the people or commune of Paris; there were very few landed proprietors; most of the deputies possessed no patrimony, and were known only by the noise they had made in clubs and popular meetings. —*Révue Chronologique de l' Histoire de France*, p. 109.

† Madame Roland, *Appel à l'impartiale Posterité*, tom. ii. p. 30.

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The Mountain.

sonné, Gaudet, Isnard, and Verginaud, were among their principal supporters.

The third party was composed of men despised and detested in society, but peculiarly favoured by the rabble: among them were Lacroix; Couthon, feeble and paralytic, with a mild voice and the heart of a tiger; Chabot, who had been a priest, but was now become an atheist; Merlin, Bazire, and a few more, undistinguished as yet, but growing into horrible celebrity. Affectedly occupying the highest seats in the hall, they gained the name of the Mountain, while the Royalists were termed the Right Side, and the Girondists the Plain*.

Parties out of
the Assembly.

Duke of
Orléans.

Talent or influence in the Assembly was of small moment, compared to that which might be possessed or acquired among the people; and for this there were many competitors. The Duke of Orléans, although the remains of his wasted fortune still attached to him some needy adventurers, could hardly be mentioned as one. Lafayette, half awake to the dangers he had created, was in a similar decline. He was considered a sort of protector of the Right Side; but, if they could rely on his principles, his power no longer existed; the constitution having deprived him of his command of the national guard, he became a candidate for the office of Mayor of Paris; the phrase *maire du palais* was revived in application to him; and, on a poll, Petion, whom the Jacobins styled “the virtuous,” defeated him by a majority exceeding two to one†. Aided by his late colleague Robespierre, and by Danton, a briefless lawyer, but a man of considerable talent, especially

Clubs.

* M. de Chateaubriand, from the history of Athens, in the time of Solon, produces a curious parallel to this division and denomination of factions. “For a long time,” he says, “the state had nourished in its bosom three factions. The first, called the Mountain party, was composed, like the famous party of the same name in France, of the poorest citizens in the republic, who wished for a pure democracy, and only waited for a favourable opportunity to rise against the established institutions; they were the Jacobins of Athens. The second party, known by the name of the Valley, contained the wealthy possessors of estates, who demanded an oligarchical constitution. These were their Aristocrats. Lastly, under a third power, distinguished by the appellation of the Coast, all the commercial men of Attica ranged themselves. These acted the part of the Modérés.”—*Historical, Political, and Moral Essay on Revolutions*, p. 29.

† 6728 to 3126.

for unprepared oratory, Petion enjoyed for a time a complete ascendancy in the popular clubs of Jacobins and Cordeliers. Lafayette, who had omitted to suppress them, was the patron of a rival society, called also, from its sitting in a suppressed convent of monks, the Feuillants. Against this Assembly nothing was to be alleged; their proceedings were decorous, their language temperate, and their members respectable. A decree of the Constituent Assembly had prohibited clubs from assuming a corporate or collective character, and from passing decisions on public affairs*. The Jacobins, daily displaying their contempt of this law, obtained dominion over the Assembly, and, before the end of the year, a mob of them, armed with bludgeons, assailed the Feuillants in full meeting, dispersed them with abuse and blows, destroyed their registers, and effectually prevented their re-assembling. Some members, complaining to the new-made Mayor, received the characteristic answer, "The law is on your side, but "the will of the people is above the law†."

To these causes of ascendancy, the republican party added great obligations to the press. Not by appeal to reason was this portion of the warfare carried on; nor to disgusting libels or detected falsehoods, audaciously repeated, was the conflict entirely confided; such means were not spared; but the journalists now learned to fill their columns with vulgar and profane ribaldry, expressed in the gross and obscene terms used by the lowest of the rabble; blasphemies and indecencies which labourers who could earn their bread, or prostitutes not yet reduced to the most infamous and abandoned class, would have shuddered to pronounce: such were the daily productions of Marat (*l'ami du peuple*), Hebert (*le pere Duchesne*), and Fréron (*l'orateur du peuple*). Filth and ribaldry did not form the limits of their declamations; massacre and plunder were also recommended as necessary to the establishment of genuine liberty and perfect equality‡.

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Feuillants.

Sept. 28.

Journals

* Mémoires de l'Abbé Georgel, tom. ii. p. 490; tom. iii. p. 281.

† La Vallée, Histoire des Factions, etc. tom. i. p. 219.

‡ In the foregoing statements I have followed the histories; chiefly Lacre-

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Sitting of the
Assembly.

Oct. 1.

Their proceed-
ings

and views.

3rd.

The King goes
to the Assem-
bly.

7th.

Laws against
the emigrants.

July 9.

On the first day of its meeting, the Legislative Assembly (such was the title given to it) took an oath of fidelity to the constitution. No order of business was arranged or prescribed, and consequently every member introduced the subject which pressed on his mind, or was suggested by the people, males and females, in the galleries, who, from a spirit of sedition, or frequently to earn a price paid for their exertions, applauded, interrupted, suggested motions, and impelled or overawed the representatives. Three objects, or they might be resolved into two, formed the anxious desire of this body. To degrade and vilify the King; to destroy his office and establish a republican form of government; and to urge the country into a war. The first was to be effected by personal attacks, and by passing decrees which honour and conscience would not permit the King to sanction; and war would be produced by means easy to every nation which is resolved on such a measure.

An attack on the King was begun when he proposed to visit the Assembly in person to take the constitutional oath. Condorcet complained that his chair was of scandalous magnificence, and, after angry and insolent speeches from Couthon and Chabot, it was reduced in form and height; it was for a time decreed that the terms "Sire" and "your Majesty" should no longer be used; but this vote was the next day rescinded. Pastoret, the president, in terms which might almost pass for burlesque, assured the King that the constitution, far from shaking his authority, had given it stability; it had rendered him the first monarch in the world.

Laws of great severity were passed against the emigrants. In the Constituent Assembly, such decrees had been in some degree averted by the intrepidity of Mirabeau; but, after his death, a law was obtained,

telle, tom. ix. liv. 9, and the historical authorities referred to in a former publication in 1799, intitled Biographical Memoirs of the French Revolution; La Vallée and other writers of Memoirs; and I have also consulted Thiers, Histoire de la Révolution, tom. ii. c. 1. On the comparative quality of the Journals, see also Dumont's Souvenirs sur Mirabeau, p. 272.

subjecting their property to a treble assessment; and the King was induced to issue a proclamation commanding their return; but this law was repealed after he had accepted the constitution.

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July 1.

Emigration had increased to a prodigious extent; a report to the Assembly stated that nineteen hundred officers had deserted; and, after much discussion, a decree was carried, commanding Monsieur to return in two months, on pain of forfeiting his title to the regency; and another, declaring that Frenchmen assembled beyond the frontier were suspected* of conspiracy against their country; by a third, that, on the first day of January, those who continued so assembled should be declared guilty of conspiracy, prosecuted, and punished with death; the estates of those who did not appear were to be confiscated during their lives. By a subsequent decree, the King's brother and some other nobles were declared to be in a state of accusation, and ordered to be tried by the national court at Orléans for conspiracy against their country†.

Oct. 14.
Against
Monsieur.

Oct. 28.

Nov. 9.

1792.
Jan. 1.

To the decrees concerning his brother, Louis gave his assent; but withheld it from the other; and the refusal afforded great triumph to his enemies.

The King
refuses his
sanction.

When the minister, Duport Dutertre, offered to explain the King's reasons, the president, Verginaud, said that the constitution granted to the King a veto, but not the power of explaining his motives. By advice of his ministers, Louis issued a proclamation and wrote letters to both his brothers, exhorting them, as Frenchmen and as brothers, to return to their proper place, which was near his person. The Princes refused compliance; the Assembly disputed the King's right to issue a proclamation; and it was intimated, and probably with truth, that the sentiments imparted in his published letters were counteracted by others written confidentially‡.

The King's
proclamation
and letters.

Nov. 11.

In the persecution of the clergy, another mode was

Decrees
against the
clergy.

* This word formed afterward a description of offence in which many were implicated and lost their lives.

† La Vallée, tom. i. p. 174.

‡ The Letters are in Thiers, tom. ii. p. 288.

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found of torturing and vilifying the King. Under pretence of relieving the necessities of the state, the Constituent Assembly had plundered them of all their possessions and revenues; even the church plate had been coined into money. Then, before the constitution was formed, came the requisition of an oath, which was refused, as contrary to the decrees of the Pope, and to the conscience of individuals in the Assembly. By many priests it was taken, under the express reservation that they were not required to swear to any thing further than obedience, as citizens, to the law, without prejudice to their religious tenets. Dreadful persecutions ensued; the ejected clergy were assaulted, tortured, imprisoned, murdered, and no punishment followed: still their unbending firmness galled the pride and stimulated the ferocity of the philosophers, who devised an artful plan for their destruction. Several articles were introduced into the constitution to which it was known they could not accede. Religious vows were no longer recognized; ministers were to be chosen by the people; marriage was reduced to a mere civil contract; and some other declarations were made respecting ecclesiastical property, totally repugnant to the faith and discipline acknowledged by the church. The anti-christian party, in the legislative Assembly, complained incessantly of the non-juring priests: they could not attribute to them any seditious expressions or treasonable meetings; but it was said that they continued in their rectory houses as long as they could, saying mass and preparing holy water, and, through them, the constitutional churches were deserted. Violent denunciations from clubs and other assemblages were daily received, and at length an insidious proposition was made, under pretence of a regard to the religious scruples of the clergy, that they should be required only to swear that they would be faithful to the nation, the law, and the King, and would maintain the constitution decreed by the first Assembly. Framed as that constitution was, no conscientious priest could swear to maintain it; but, by this decree, those who should refuse were declared incapable of every eccle-

Oct. 4.

Nov. 29.

siastical function and civil employ ; deprived of the pensions which had been assigned them as compensation for their benefices ; suspected of revolt against the law, and evil intentions toward their country ; and they were to be confined in the town which the department should appoint for their exile or prison.

Encouraged by a petition from the department of Paris, representing that the decree was repugnant to the principles of toleration consecrated by the constitution itself, the King again refused his sanction ; but still the decree had the effect of driving to ruin the whole body of clergy ; their pittance, poor as it was, no longer could be obtained ; the law afforded no security to their persons, nor any redress when they were maltreated and even murdered. By subsequent decrees, all religious congregations, whether of priests or laymen, were forbidden, and all ecclesiastical vestments suppressed. The unhappy, but unbending, victims sought refuge in foreign countries, and were compelled to live on voluntary benevolence : England, a Protestant country, was honourably distinguished in this work of charity*. Thus had the republican party placed the emigrants and all their property in a state of proscription and plunder ; placed the priesthood in such a position, that contempt, if they complied with their decrees, beggary or banishment if they did not, must be their fate ; and they had made the King appear as an enemy to the will of the nation, and a contemner of the decrees of its representatives, for having exercised, in a constitutional manner, his legal authority.

In decreeing the seizure of Avignon and Le Comtat, the Constituent Assembly, while they committed an act of violence and gross injustice, prepared the way for horrible and savage atrocities. The measures adopted to obtain a party in Avignon favourable to this decree, had long extinguished all the powers of government, armed the people against each other, and produced the horrors of civil war. The troops of

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The King
refuses his
sanction.

Dec. 19.

Other decrees.

Massacre at
Avignon.

* Lacroix, tom. ix. p. 43 ; Thiers, tom. ii. p. 28 ; Barruel's History of the Clergy ; and all the histories of the times.

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Oct. 16.

Conduct of the
Assembly.

Nov.

1792.
March.

the popular faction (for the conquest was not conducted by the regular army), were headed by a monster named Jourdan, who, from his activity in massacres, had gained the name of Coupe-tête, and gloried in the title. His troop was composed of criminals from the galleys, smugglers, deer stealers, and other members of the adventurous tribes which infested and disgraced society. These men having, by repeated insults, robberies, and oppressions, exasperated the people so much, that they put to death Lescuyer, the secretary of the municipality, Jourdan immediately let loose the blood-hounds of vengeance; they fired on the citizens, and, having taken a great number of prisoners, confined them in the palace which was formerly the residence of the Pope. In the night, they drew them forth, one by one, and slew about sixty with iron bars. These sacrifices were not sufficient; the whole town was, during that night, a scene of indiscriminate carnage and unbridled licentiousness; to the horrors so often related as appertaining to similar transactions, as murdering parents with their families, infants at the breast, and women advanced in pregnancy, accounts written even by fierce Jacobins add the horrible circumstance of cannibal feasts, in which the murderers banqueted on the trembling limbs, palpitating hearts, and reeking entrails of the dead*. The total number of victims is computed at six hundred and twenty-one. The complaints on this subject were first received with due horror in the Assembly; but a party in the clubs soon begun to espouse such a congenial cause. Jourdan's host of murderers were termed brave brigands, and even heroes; representations were made, which, although demonstrated to be false in every particular, served as a basis for a motion of amnesty; and, to the astonishment and horror of all the world, Jourdan was not only pardoned, but reinstated in power, and sent back to exercise new cruelties on men whom, even in his

* This fact is particularly recorded by Prud'homme, *Histoire des Erreurs*, &c. vol. iv. p. 11. And, for the general narrative, see the same vol. p. 4, 208, et seqq.; *Histoire du Clergé*, par Barruel, p. 149; *Conjuration du Duc d'Orléans*, tom. iii. p. 162.

dungeon, he had never ceased to threaten, and whom he now hated with redoubled rancour*.

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While the attention of the Assembly was engaged on these scenes at home, the intelligence from the West Indies completed the portrait of horror. St. Domingo, the largest, the richest, the best cultivated, and apparently the happiest, of all transatlantic islands, was reduced to a waste. The declaration of general liberty, hastily made by the Constituent Assembly, unaccompanied with any restraint, not guided or moderated by any explanation, produced effects which sagacity might have expected, although they might be overlooked by a sanguine and too confident philanthropy. Grégoire, Condorcet, and Brissot, leading members of the society called *Amis des Noirs*, circulated the declaration of the rights of man, with inflammatory comments. A conspiracy was formed, which, for extent and secrecy, has seldom, if ever, been equalled. In one night, flames broke out on all the estates in the French part of the Island; the white proprietors, without distinction of age or sex, were given up to butchery and torture; and, beside an uncounted carnage, two hundred sugar and six hundred coffee plantations were reduced to ashes. The few white people who had the good fortune to obtain a refuge in Cape François and Port-au-prince, received relief from the Earl of Effingham, governor of Jamaica; but as Brissot and his adherents attributed to the English ministry the design of establishing for the King a transatlantic empire, where the distinction of master and slave should still be retained, the Assembly contented themselves with expressing formal thanks, not to Lord Effingham or the British government, but to the British nation. The importation of produce ceased, rebellion raged, and the Assembly, when their decree was of no value, declared that the people of colour were intitled to all rights and privileges in common with the whiter†.

1792.

Insurrection at
St. Domingo.

August 22.

Nov. 5.

1792.
March.

* In addition to the authorities already cited, see Lacretelle, tom. ix. p. 51; La Vallée, tom. i. p. 195.

† Lacretelle, tom. ix. p. 55. La Vallée, tom. i. p. 196. Bryan Edwards's *History of St. Domingo*. Marsh's *History of the Politics, &c.* c. 2. Bertrand's *Annals*, vol. v. pp. 60, 144, 190, 299, and vol. vi. p. 32.

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LXXIII.1792.
Depression of
assignats.1791.
Dec. 17.

June.

Eagerness for
war.State of
ministers.

To these embarrassing circumstances, which were amply sufficient to engage the attention of any government, may be added the desperate state of finance, and the beginning of interior troubles. Assignats were in a rapid progress of depression, at a discount of more than fifty per cent., while the issue was continued with wanton profusion: the fabrication amounted to sixteen hundred millions of francs (£66,666,666). The people, encouraged to confide in their own sagacity for the discovery of wrongs, and their own force for the removal of them, sought to remedy the scarcity of colonial produce by plundering the warehouses of the grocers; while the Assembly would afford no assistance to the sufferers. Not only did this tolerated violence stalk abroad, but already were those combinations formed among the loyal and pious inhabitants of Poitou and Brittany, which afterward expanded into that fatal conflict termed the war of La Vendée*.

In the midst of such difficulties, the dominating faction determined to urge a declaration of war, convinced that by that alone they would be enabled to carry into effect their plans for the destruction of royalty, with the establishment of a republic, and their own supreme authority. Favoured by events which they neither procured nor foresaw, they succeeded in some of these objects: in what related to their own power and greatness they failed most miserably; failed like an unskilful engineer who is destroyed by the explosion of his own works; burned to death in the conflagration of his own combustibles.

In the disunion and unpopularity of ministers, the republican party found powerful assistance. The members of the Constituent Assembly being by their own decree excluded from the cabinet as well as the senate, no administration which was not disposed to overthrow royalty could hope to subsist long: the tribunes, the clubs, and the mob, overruled the debates, and pointed out individuals to general hatred†.

* Memoirs of the Marquise de la Roche Jaquelin, p. 5.

† Lacretelle, tom. ix. pp. 28—73. Bertrand's Memoirs, vol. v. Thiers, tom. ii. p. 58.

To introduce a ministry favourable to their projects, had been the object of much toil, and had occasioned some disagreements. No direct breach had as yet taken place between Robespierre and Brissot; but each was the leader of a separate faction. Danton, Camille Desmoulins, and a large number of individuals, without character, but not without ability, were the adherents of Robespierre. These men contemplated general plunder and an agrarian division of property, and professedly renounced all faith in revelation and the very being of a God. Robespierre was averse to war; but all his adherents were not of his opinion: the ardent genius of the French people repelled every suggestion which could be imputed to fear; while the daily habit of reviling sovereigns under the title of despots, their subjects as unenlightened slaves, and all their social and religious systems as crude barbarisms, which the philosophy and the bayonets of France could best reform, made them sanguine in the hope of glorious and profitable results from a conflict. Such were the dispositions and feelings on which the Brissotine party had to work. Their leader avowed that it was by means of war alone that the abolition of royalty could be effected; and on this principle he always founded his answers to Robespierre in the Jacobin Club*. He enforced his opinions by this dilemma: If our arms are successful, our troops will carry our principles into all parts of Europe; if otherwise, the people will easily be convinced that defeats are owing to treacherous generals, employed by a treacherous chief, and concur in removing the cause of all their evils, the throne.

As a party, the Brissotines were not likely to acquire and retain an extensive popularity. Their chiefs, while they affected to lead the people, and distinguished themselves by their contumelious treatment of those above them, were cold, reserved, and haughty toward those with whom they associated, and by their conduct laid the foundation of a hatred which was fatal to them†.

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LXXIII.

1791.

Efforts to
change them.

Robespierre's
party.

Motives.

The Bris-
sotines.

* Brissot à tous les Républicains. Tracts, p. 171.

† History of the Brissotines, by Camille Desmoulins, p. 10.

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LXXIII.1791.
Madame
Roland.

Robespierre and his party appeared to have no centre or place of peculiar resort and private union; but the Brissotines regularly assembled and held their consultations at the house of Roland de la Platière, whose wife was the real, and not disavowed, leader of their conclave. She was the daughter of a tradesman, endowed with a considerable portion of acquired knowledge, and, as a writer, mistress of a vigorous and energetic style; bold, active, and turbulent, the inspirer and ruler of her husband, who was, by four-and-twenty years, her senior. She aspired to be leader of a political party; and the wife of Condorcet, the mistress of Louvet, and the mother of Petion, thought they acquired importance by becoming her associates. To be eminently favoured by her, the chief thing necessary was, to hate and despise the court and courtiers, and to profess extreme republican opinions*.

Moderate
party.

There was a third party, destined rather to be the sport and sacrifice of the other two, than to make themselves useful or even conspicuous; these were such men as Barnave, Lameth, and Lafayette, who, having given impulse to the revolution, promoted its excesses, and triumphed in the destruction of the nobility and the church, thought they could arrest the career of destruction, and give solidity to the phantom they had raised,—an unprotected, powerless, or, as they called it, a constitutional monarchy. To this party the Duke of Orléans might possibly have joined himself. He had professed his regard for the King, and lamented that his conduct was misrepresented; he appeared at the levee; but the King's friends, unapprised of his views, and suspicious of his intentions, treated him with indignity and violence, and compelled him to retire, inflamed with sentiments of redoubled hostility and vengeance†.

Conduct of
the Emperor.

It seemed difficult to find a pretext for war. The Emperor had ceased all offensive movements, received M. De Noailles as ambassador, and permitted the tri-

* Œuvres de Madame Roland, tom. ii. Dumont's Souvenirs sur Mirabeau, &c. p. 276.

† Bertrand's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 310.

coloured flag to be displayed in his harbours; but occasion to quarrel soon arose. In a dispatch to the French ambassador, Prince Kaunitz, the Austrian prime minister, stated that the elector of Treves was disposed to place the emigrants in his dominions under regulations satisfactory to France, and claimed the Emperor's aid in maintaining the peace and security of his electorate. Although convinced of the good intentions of the Most Christian King, and that it was not the interest of France to provoke hostilities, the Emperor, considering the state of the French government and the want of subordination of powers, especially in the provinces and municipalities, felt himself obliged to order Marshal Bender to afford to the Elector speedy and efficacious succours, in case of attack or imminent danger of invasion.

With this paper, the King sent a message to the Assembly, declaring his astonishment at the language of the Austrian minister; the Emperor might have been deceived by the Elector of Treves; and the King had written to him, renewing the requisition for dispersing the emigrant forces, and declaring that, unless that were done by a time fixed, he should propose to the National Assembly to compel it by force of arms*. The letter was heard with unbounded applause, and the papers referred to the diplomatic committee. While the report was preparing, the Assembly was authentically informed of the complete expulsion of the emigrants from the electorate of Treves: but still the demagogues, affecting to see danger to the constitution, made decrees and swore oaths for its maintenance, and laws of increased rigour against the emigrants. On the motion of Condorcet, an address to the King was voted, recapitulating divers instances of the Emperor's misconduct, and requiring that he should declare whether he intended to live in peace and good understanding, and renounce all treaties and conventions directed against the sovereignty, independence, and safety of the nation; full and entire satisfaction

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1791.
Dec. 31.
Prince
Kaunitz's
dispatch to
the French
minister.

Communi-
cated to the
Assembly.

1792.
Jan. 6th.
The emigrants
expelled from
Treves.

14th.

25th.
Attacks on the
Emperor.

* See these documents in Rivington's Annual Register for 1792, part ii. p. 209.

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LXXIII.1791.
28th.

on these points was to be demanded ; silence or an evasive answer to be considered a declaration of war. The King, although he deemed that this address, in the form of a decree, trenched on his constitutional prerogative of maintaining political relations and conducting negotiations, informed the Assembly that he had already demanded of the Emperor a positive explanation of the principal articles they adverted to, and M. De Noailles had obtained from Prince Kaunitz an answer which promised to obviate the principal grounds of complaint.

Feb. 17.

Conduct of
Prussia.
28th.

On the points in dispute, the Count de Goltz, the Prussian chargé d'affaires at Paris, declared that an invasion of the territory of the empire would be regarded as a declaration of war against the whole Germanic body ; and consequently his Prussian Majesty, in conjunction with the Emperor, would oppose it with all his forces, in conformity with a treaty signed at Berlin by the two potentates.

Feb. 8.

Pacific views
of Leopold.

The Emperor discouraged all warlike councils, and expressly disapproved of the preparations which, by the advice and with the promised support of the Empress of Russia, the King of Sweden was making against France. His policy was untainted with meanness or timidity ; but his beneficial influence was prevented by his death, which ensued after a very short illness. A suspicion of poison was entertained ; but his decease is ascribed to his own indiscretion in the excessive use of exciting medicaments*.

March 1.
His death.Feelings of the
Empress and
King of
Sweden.

Soon after the Emperor's demise, a more active enemy to France was removed. Gustavus the Third, a prince of high principles and enthusiastic disposition, had seen with indignation the progress of the revolution, and sympathized in the sufferings of the Royal Family. The Empress of Russia participating in his sentiments, they had prepared for active co-operation with the Emperor and the King of Prussia, if the conference at Mantua had produced an armed confederacy.

* All these transactions are detailed from the debates and the state papers, which may be found in Rivington's Annual Register 1792, part ii. For a full account of Leopold's illness, death, and character, see *Mémoires d'un Homme d'État*, tome i. p. 251 to 260.

Catherine openly and ostentatiously protected and encouraged the emigrants, sent avowed ministers to represent them at Coblenz, and entered into a close offensive and defensive alliance, by a treaty signed at Drottingholm, which had secret articles relating to the affairs of France. The object was to effect a counter-revolution, both for the sake of the oppressed King, and the general good of Europe; but both Sovereigns fell into the general mistake, of supposing the revolution to be a mere insurrection, which a shew of determination and a few acts of vigour would be sufficient to repress. While arranging his plans, and preparing for their execution, the days of Gustavus were terminated by the hand of an assassin, named Ankaarstrom, at a masked ball in his own palace*. His successor was an infant; and his uncle, the Duke of Sudermania, the legal regent, determined on and preserved a strict neutrality.

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LXXXIII.

1791.
Oct. 19.

1792.
March 17.
Murder of
Gustavus.

The murdered King survived his wound twelve days, and, in the course of that dreadful interval, said, "I should like to know what Brissot will say of my death." Perhaps, even the bad opinion he entertained of the French would not have led him to anticipate the fact, that his murderer would be revered in Paris as a hero, almost a demi-god; his name always mentioned with enthusiasm, and his bust placed in the hall of the Jacobin Club, next to that of Brutus†.

29th.
Honours paid
to the assassin.

At the period in which these events took place, Brissot succeeded in supplanting the existing administration. He procured a decree of accusation against De Lessart, who, without being allowed a hearing, was sent to prison at Orléans, and soon afterwards murdered‡. Bertrand de Moleville had the benefit of a hearing: he was doubly fortunate, in escaping imprisonment and from his country. The other ministers were dismissed, or terrified into resignation; and the King, in despair, yielded to the will of his rulers,

Changes of
ministry.

March 10.

* See vol. iii. p. 202.

† Histories and Journals, and particularly *Mémoires d'un Homme d'État*, tome i. pp. 159, 163, 275; Bertrand's *Annals*, vol. vi. p. 39; Bouillé's *Memoirs*, p. 465.

‡ For an account of the base and infamous conduct of Brissot in this transaction, see Dumont, *Souvenirs sur Mirabeau*, etc. p. 263.

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LXXIII.1791.
Jacobin admin-
istration.

and formed an entire new administration. Dumouriez, who had shewn bravery and conduct in the field, skill in some minor diplomatic employments, and ability as a writer, was minister for foreign affairs. The war department was entrusted to Degraives. Lacoste, Duranton, and Clavière, were appointed to the marine, the law, and the treasury ; and the list was completed by making Roland minister of the interior, or home department. This junta was aptly termed the Jacobin administration. Dumouriez and Degraives gave a public pledge of their intentions, by repairing, immediately on their nomination, to the Jacobin Club, where Dumouriez made an harangue from the tribune, with a red woollen cap, a newly adopted emblem of sedition, on his head*.

War with
Germany.

War was now inevitable: the press, supplied and directed by the new government, was continually employed in rendering an accommodation or explanation with the successor of Leopold impossible. They required a clear and satisfactory explanation of his intentions. His minister answered, that his Majesty intended in all respects to follow the policy of his predecessor. As the basis of a permanent good understanding, he required satisfaction to the Princes whose possessions had been seized, and to the Pope ; and such measures with respect to the government of France as should be adequate to repress those proceedings which gave disquiet to other nations. This answer, and the dispatches in general, were treated as evasive, and submitted, without discrimination, to the Assembly, and through them to the press. These disclosures occasioned a series of intemperate reflections on the conduct and sentiments of the new sovereign. He was peremptorily required to reduce the number of his troops in the provinces, and at the same time impetuously pressed for answers ; and, these measures being perseveringly pursued, the French ministers found themselves, in a month after their nomination, enabled to make a declaration of war popular, and to

March.

* Bertrand's Annals, vol. vi. p. 11 ; Dumont, Souvenirs sur Mirabeau, etc. p. 266.

impress their adherents with an opinion of its being necessary*.

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The speech made by the King, in recommending it to the Assembly, was received with applause; and, in the same evening, war was declared against the King of Hungary and Bohemia; but, notwithstanding the dispatch of Count Goltz, Prussia was not mentioned. The decree was opposed in a speech by one member, M. Bequet, only; and no more than six divided against it. The debate was more distinguished by violence than vigour; and one member, Merlin de Thionville, disclosed the real views of his party, by recommending that their declaration should be war with kings—peace with nations†.

1791.
20th.

* See the state papers in Rivington's Annual Register for 1792, part ii. p. 233 to 242.

† Histories; Mémoires d'un Homme d'État, tome i. p. 159 to 340. The private intrigues and diplomatic forms which led to this conclusion, are amply detailed in the authority last quoted, and are highly deserving of attention.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTY-FOURTH.

1791—1792.

Transactions in France applauded in England.—Societies formed.—Conduct of some Dissenters.—Unitarian Society. Dr. Priestley.—Revolutionary Commemoration at Birmingham announced.—Hand-bill issued.—Answer to it.—The meeting persevered in—declaration of its members.—Riot—destruction of meeting and dwelling houses.—Disgraceful conduct of the rioters.—Exertions to bring the guilty to justice.—Trials.—Actions against the hundred.—Gratitude expressed by the sufferers.—Contrary feelings excited.—Dr. Priestley goes to London—receives compliments—quits England.—Marriage of the Duke of York.—Meeting of Parliament.—King's speech.—Address of the Lords.—Amendment moved in the House of Commons by Mr. Grey—negatived.—Debate on the war in India.—Major Maitland moves for papers—some granted.—Papers respecting Russia.—Motion by Earl Fitzwilliam—by Mr. Grey—by Lord Porchester.—Opposed by Lord Grenville.—Motion by Mr. Whitbread.—Mr. Jenkinson.—Observations.—Reduction in the army.—Mr. Pitt proposes a repeal of taxes, and gradual extinction of the national debt.—Mr. Sheridan.—Mr. Fox.—Debated in the Lords.—Conclusion of Lord Guildford's parliamentary life.—Lottery bill.—Provision for the Duke of York.—Animadversions.—Action against Mr. Rose respecting the Westminster election.—Motion by Mr. Thompson.—Petition on the subject.—Mr. Fox's motion.—Reform of Parliament.—Mr. Sheridan's motion respecting Scotch burghs.—Mr. Grey's notice of motion for Reform. Irregular conversation on the subject.

HOWEVER justly the proceedings in France might be censured and dreaded by the judicious, they had, in England, many warm admirers and assiduous imitators. Numerous were the publications in which all the revolutionary acts were palliated, justified, and even extolled; and our own institutions, in church and state, the crown not excepted, were decried as oppressive and barbarous, and the whole system devoted to destruction, as an intolerable nuisance.

France had borrowed both the form and the name of clubs from this country; but the extent to which they carried them, their bold claims to control the legislature, their affiliations, and their modes of correspondence, intitled them to a sort of originality, and soon found partizans and imitators among us. Some societies, which, before the French revolution, had a tranquil and unobserved existence, now pressed forward into conspicuous notice; and some, of more recent formation, established themselves upon principles purely French, avowing the sentiments and emulating the example of the most exaggerated and violent in Paris. Mention has already been made of the Revolution Society; of its proceedings; of the sermon by Dr. Price, and its consequences. The formation and proceedings of other bodies; the Constitutional Society, the London Corresponding Society, and the Friends of the People, will require notice in a future page. Here it may suffice to observe, that they all, except the Friends of the People, entered into correspondence with the Jacobin Club in Paris; their addresses were cordially received, and their affiliation proclaimed. This easy union among persons who had apparently no interest—certainly no national or religious interest—in common, is stated to be a portion of a deep-laid conspiracy, formed in secret societies, by which the overthrow of nobility and royalty, of church establishments, and of Christianity itself, was meditated and prepared*.

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1791.
Transactions
in France ap-
plauded in
England.

Clubs formed.

* Barruel's History of Jacobinism; Robinson's Proofs of a Conspiracy; Rivington's Annual Register, 1791, 1792, p. 215 to 223, and the authorities there cited; also Lord Orford's Works, vol. v. p. 123.

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LXXIV.1791.
Conduct of
some Dissen-
ters.Unitarian
Society.

Dr. Priestley.

1791.
January.

It happened, unfortunately, that many gentlemen, who dissented from the doctrines of the church of England, and particularly those of the class called Unitarians, had been most forward and vehement in professing admiration of the proceedings in France, where their welcome gratulations were answered by undisguised avowals and cordial wishes. An association, formed under the name of the Unitarian Society, ardently and explicitly adopted the revolutionary principle. Dr. Priestley, one of its conspicuous members, resided at Birmingham, where his late displays in politics had created many enemies. In a funeral sermon on Dr. Price, he extolled his conduct, boasted of his influence in the French revolution, and compared his death to that of a warrior in the moment of victory. He appeared among the numerous opponents of Mr. Burke, and, with unnecessary vehemence, professed opinions which even the French constitution did not sanction. "The Americans," he said, "had set a glorious example to France and to the world. They had formed a completely new government, on the principles of equal liberty and the rights of men, 'without nobles,' as Dr. Price said, 'without bishops, and without a king.' If arbitrary princes tremble at these great examples, let the people rejoice. Princes will keep within bounds, or the people will be encouraged to hope that their deliverance is at hand. There will still be religion, and, of course, ministers of it; as there will be teachers of philosophy and practitioners in medicine; but it will no longer be the concern of the state. There will be no more lord bishops or archbishops, with the titles and powers of temporal princes. Every man will provide religion for himself; and therefore it will be such as, after due inquiry and examination, he shall think to be founded on truth, and best calculated to make men good citizens, good friends, and good neighbours, in this world, as well as to fit them for another."—"If the condition of other nations," he adds, "be as much bettered as that of France will probably be, by her improved system of government,

“ this great crisis, dreadful as it appears in prospect, will be ‘ a consummation devoutly to be wished,’ and, though calamitous to many, perhaps to many innocent persons, will be eventually most glorious and happy*.”

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1791.

Expressing such sentiments, and knowing the feelings of the country at large, and of Birmingham in particular, it does seem astonishing that the Doctor should propose, on the next return of the anniversary, to celebrate the capture of the Bastille in that town. A motion to that effect was carried in the Unitarian Society, preparations arranged, and advertisements issued accordingly†.

Revolutionary commemoration at Birmingham announced.

The sensation occasioned by this proceeding was highly increased by a hand-bill, circulated a few days before the festival, in which the enthusiasm displayed in the attack of the Bastille was extolled, and the French were most strangely lauded for the generous humanity that taught them to spare the lives of their oppressors. The people were exhorted to extinguish the mean prejudices of nations. “ But is it possible to forget,” it was added, “ that your own Parliament is venal, your ministers hypocritical, your clergy legal oppressors, the reigning family extravagant, the crown of a certain great personage becoming every day too weighty for the head that wears it, too weighty for the people that gave it. Your taxes partial and oppressive; your representation a cruel insult upon the sacred rights of property, religion, and freedom. But, on the fourteenth of this month, prove to the sycophants of the day that you reverence the olive branch, that you will sacrifice to public tranquillity, till the majority shall exclaim—‘ The peace of slavery is worse than the war of freedom:’ of that day let tyrants beware.” These bills, in small number, were exhibited at a public house; a counter declaration was immediately prepared, in which the incendiary assertions were termed no less false and

Hand-bill issued.

July 11.
Answer to it.

* Letters to the Right Hon. Edmund Burke, Birmingham, 1791, pp. 39—148—151.

† Tomline's Life of Pitt, vol. ii. p. 118; Rivington's Ann. Reg. 1792, p. 310.

CHAP.
LXXIV.

1791.

13th.
The meeting
persevered in.Declaration of
its members.

factionous than the wretch who proposed them : and a reward of one hundred guineas was offered, on conviction of the writer, printer, publisher, or distributor.

Under such circumstances, it might have been expected that a commemoration, utterly uncalled for, and portending evil consequences, would have been forborne ; but, after some doubt had been felt on the subject, the promoters of the meeting contented themselves with declaring their entire disapprobation of the hand-bill, and their ignorance of the author. Sensible themselves, they said, of the advantage of a free government, they rejoiced in the extension of liberty to their neighbours ; but they asserted their own firm attachment to our constitution, vested in the three estates of King, Lords, and Commons. Considering what had before been written and said by these persons, no great confidence was reposed in the sincerity of this appeal, nor could any justification be offered of those who thought it sufficient to abstain from doing evil themselves, although they ought to have foreseen that evil done by others would be the probable result of their acts.

14th.
Riot.Destruction of
meeting and
dwelling
houses.

On the appointed day, a crowd surrounded the door of the hotel where the dinner was prepared, and the company, consisting of eighty-one gentlemen, entered amidst hisses and other marks of disapprobation. Toward evening, the tumult increased, and the meeting broke up before six o'clock. Soon afterward, the populace demolished the windows of the hotel ; and, proceeding from one outrage to another, destroyed two meeting houses, the dwelling of Dr. Priestley, and of several other persons entertaining similar sentiments, both in the town and neighbourhood. The civil magistrates could not disperse or check the rioters, and these unwarrantable excesses continued at intervals from Thursday to Sunday evening.

14th.

Dr. Priestley lost, in this convulsion, beside his household property, a valuable library and philosophical apparatus, and manuscripts which the labours of his remaining life could not be expected to restore. At his house, as at those of other sufferers, brutal in-

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1791.
Disgraceful
conduct of the
rioters.

toxication rendered some of the mob victims of their own delinquency. The town prison and that of the court of requests were thrown open; magisterial authority was unregarded; remonstrance was drowned by clamour; and, in one instance, an offer of one hundred guineas, if a party would desist from further mischief, was repelled, with cries of "no bribery!" yet they levied money, and received orders of credit on ale-houses, of which they amply availed themselves*. At length, three troops of horse arrived, and tranquillity was restored.

Beside Dr. Priestley, and the proprietors of the meeting houses, the principal sufferers were eleven in number†, all Dissenters: their losses, at what they considered a mitigated rate, exceeded thirty-five thousand pounds.

It has been asserted, by the sufferers in this most disgraceful riot, that their religious, and not their political, principles excited the fury of the mob, and the malice of those who impelled them; the clergy were accused of a guilty participation in the transactions, the superior gentry of influentially encouraging them, and the magistracy of a degree of supineness, amounting to acquiescence‡; but of these charges, no proof was ever attempted; and, in an investigation in the House of Commons, it was never suggested that such evidence could be produced.

As the assizes were very near, great exertions were made to bring the offenders to punishment. The magistrates of Warwickshire and Worcestershire assiduously pursued the inquiry, aided by the solicitor of the

August 22.
Exertions to
bring the guilty
to justice.

* Mr. Hutton gives this account of one transaction:—"About three o'clock, they approached me. I expostulated with them. They would have money. I gave them all I had, even to a single halfpenny, which one of them had the meanness to take. They wanted more, nor would they submit to this treatment, and began to break the windows, and attempted the goods. I then borrowed all I instantly could, which I gave them, and shook a hundred black and hard hands. 'We will have some drink.' 'You shall have what you please, if you will not injure me.' I was then seized by the collar on both sides, and hauled, a prisoner, to a neighbouring public house, where, in half an hour, I found an ale-score against me of three hundred and twenty-nine gallons."—*Life*, p. 250.

† Namely, John Taylor, Esq. Thomas Russel, Esq. William Pidcock, John Harwood, Thomas Hawkes, — Cox, William Russel, Esq. John Ryland, Esq. George Humphreys, Esq. Thomas Hutton, and William Hutton.

‡ Hutton's *Life*, p. 234, et seqq.

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1791.

treasury, an eminent counsel from London, and Mr. Bond, well known as an active and intelligent magistrate of Bow Street; and, by royal proclamation, a reward of one hundred pounds was offered, on conviction of the instigators and principals.

Trials.

Fifteen persons were apprehended, and prosecuted by the solicitor to the treasury. After an animated and impressive charge by Mr. Baron Perryn, true bills were returned against twelve individuals. The trials occupied two days; four were convicted, of whom three were executed; the other, named William Hands, was pardoned, after an investigation, carefully conducted, which proved that the circumstances produced at the trial in proof of his guilt, were, in reality, his efforts to save the property of Mr. Ryland.

1792,
April 6.

Actions against the hundreds in Worcestershire and Warwickshire, for compensation to the sufferers, were tried in the ensuing spring: the claims were reduced, in the former county, from £7903 14s. 6d. to £5504 13s.; and in the other, from £28,192, to £21,456.

1791.
July 25.
Gratitude expressed by the
sufferers.

At first, the sufferers by this unwarrantable commotion, by a public advertisement, acknowledged, with gratitude, the conduct of members of the established church, who had exerted themselves in defence of their persons or property, and, in the true spirit of Christianity, received and protected many families who were obliged to leave their own habitations; conduct which they justly declared to be the more meritorious, as these generous protectors exposed themselves to danger from a lawless mob, who wanted only a pretence for depredation.

Contrary feelings excited.

It had been well for the disturbed community, if the spirit thus displayed had been permitted to prevail; but means were soon taken to exasperate angry feelings, and to stimulate revenge. Narratives were published of the origin, cause, and progress of the event, in which no topic was spared, no assertion withheld, whether it could be proved or not, which could tend to vilify the church*, or criminate the magistracy:

* Without multiplying references, see, on this subject, Dr. Priestley's Appeal to the Public, p. 17, and part ii. preface, p. x.

it was even stated that one or more of this body had encouraged, excited, and rewarded with money and liquor, the mob, in the height of their fury, and in the most violent of their excesses*. A paper war was commenced, and conducted with great fierceness; the pulpits of the meeting houses resounded with proclamations against the supposed intolerance of the church, and rhymes were published in which all calumnies were embodied and rendered easy to the popular memory†.

Great indignation was expressed at the law proceedings. The criminal cases were viewed as a "mere farce, a joke upon justice‡;" the civil compensations were decried as altogether insufficient and unjust. With respect to the first, it does not appear that any one complains of want of zeal or ability in the advocates§, or of partiality in the judge; the blame is thrown on the witnesses and the jury.

On the compensations, the reflections are more specious. The parties injured could not obtain satisfaction for some portion of their loss. Plate, furniture,

* Hutton's Narrative, in his Life, p. 242.

† See a collection of them in the Appendix to the Account of the Riots, published at Birmingham.

‡ Such is the phrase of Mr. Hutton; Life, 274.

§ Far from exhibiting a deficiency in zeal, the learned counsel in one of the cases went to an extreme, for which no parallel occurs since the Revolution. Three prisoners were before the court, and the learned advocate who opened the case against them, after asking the jury, "if they did not punish, what would all Europe say?" and affirming that "if they did not convict, they were enemies of their country," said, "Gentlemen, I have told you, and you know the fact to be so, that Dr. Priestley's house was pulled down merely because he was a Dissenter; you know very well that is no reason at all; Dr. Priestley's life is irreproachable. I believe he would not have escaped with life, if he had staid half an hour longer. Look at those fellows; what a pretty exchange it would be, if one hundred such fellows were left alive, and Dr. Priestley thrown into the fire! If you do not convict on this occasion, and there should be another riot, he himself will be burnt. . . Gentlemen, another fourteenth of July will come next year, and probably there will be the same reason for rejoicing over the French constitution that there is this year, and I will not prevent it. . . I dislike those meetings as much as you; I should not choose to be present at them; but, in this country, I would have men dine where they please; and if they choose to dine the next fourteenth of July, which I hope they will not,—but if they do, they have a good right to drink bumper toasts and get drunk, if they please. . . And if you do not convict these vagabond fellows, Dr. Priestley himself will be burnt." And when the counsel for the prisoners afterward objected to an observation directed against them, the judge said, "I think the learned counsel has opened it very properly."—Reports of the Trials, taken in short-hand by Messrs. Marsom and Ramsay; printed by order of the Committee of Protestant Dissenters in Birmingham; published by John Thompson, Birmingham, and Johnson, St. Paul's Church Yard, London; pp. 67, 68.

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printed books, and the contents of the cellar, bear a price which may be estimated ; but manuscripts, marginal notes, memorandums, references to particular passages, which make the library a portion of the man, and connect his present existence with his by-gone years, which describe the progress of his attainments, and indicate the course of his future mental pursuits, —these can never be paid for in money ; and whatever sums might be afforded to such men as Dr. Priestley and Mr. Hutton, any remuneration they could have received would leave them impoverished in the dearest treasure of their minds, destitute of the best solace of their age. Yet for this the jury could not be to blame ; they were not awarding damages against a wrong-doer, who could be made to pay in proportion to the wantonness and malignity of his act ; but they were assessing the innocent inhabitants of the division for the crime of a lawless rabble, whom they did not agitate, and could not control, but for whose acts the law made them responsible*.

Still, the manner in which these causes were conducted, on the part of the defendants, at the assizes at Warwick, is liable to just reprehension. In defending the inhabitants of the hundreds against attempts to advance exaggerated claims, their counsel should have shewn a strict regard to equity and justice ; but, on the contrary, the defences consisted of acrimonious party attacks, and every reduction in demand was hailed as a political victory†.

Dr. Priestley
goes to London

After the devastation of his property, Dr. Priestley retired to London, where he made considerable efforts to keep up the feelings which the oppression he la-

* In relating these facts, beside the Annual Registers and periodical works, and Dr. Tomline's Life of Mr. Pitt, I have consulted a great many authorities ; among others, An authentic Account of the Riots in Birmingham, Anonymous ; Narrative of the same, by Mr. Hutton ; Thoughts on the same, by Mr. Burn and Mr. George Rous ; Appeal to the Public, by Dr. Priestley, parts i. and ii. with a copious appendix to each, including Strictures on Mr. Burn's Thoughts, and the Trials of the Rioters.

† So much was the public mind exasperated on the subject, that, in October 1793, the officers, appointed to collect the rate made for paying the damages recovered, were assailed by a mob, who were not dispersed until the riot act had been read, and four persons wounded by the discharge of fire-arms.—Rivington's Annual Register for 1793. Chronicle, p. *43.

boured under was calculated to excite. He wrote, from time to time, under different forms, statements of his case, and animadversions on his opponents. He received addresses of condolence and compliment from various congregations, colleges, and meetings of Dissenters. Condorcet and the Jacobin Club in Paris expressed their applause and their sympathy; and he was elected a member of the French Legislature, but declined the honour. These displays interested the public but little. Dr. Priestley himself, lost in the crowd and bustle of the metropolitan society, gained only momentary notice, and, in three years, after a farewell sermon at Hackney, he retired to the United States of America*, and returned no more.

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Quits England.

In the course of the summer, his Royal Highness the Duke of York, who had been at Berlin, pursuing military studies, was, with the approbation of the King, united in marriage with Frederica Charlotte Ulrica Catherine, eldest daughter of the King of Prussia. The nuptial ceremony was repeated in England, and the royal couple received general congratulations†.

Marriage of
the Duke of
York.

1791.

Sep. 28 and
Nov. 21.

In opening the session of Parliament, the King first adverted to the recent marriage in his family, and the suitable provision which he trusted would be made. He then mentioned the treaty of peace which the Turks had effected with the Emperor, and his expectation of a speedy arrangement between them and Russia; and he hoped for a speedy and fortunate conclusion of the war in India. The general state of affairs in Europe warranted some reduction in our naval and military establishments, which, with the increase of the revenue, would afford means of relieving the people from some existing taxes, and give additional efficacy to the plan for diminishing the national debt. He relied on their exertions to encourage a spirit of useful industry, confirm and increase a steady and zealous attachment to that constitution which long experience had shewn to unite the inestimable blessings of liberty and order, and to which, under the

1792.

Jan. 31.
Meeting of
Parliament.

* 1794.

† Rivington's Annual Register, 1791, pp. 40*, 42*, 48*, 52*.

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1792.

Address of the
Lords.Amendment
moved in the
House of Com-
mons.

Debate.

favour of Providence, all our other advantages are principally to be ascribed.

In the upper House, the address was carried without a division.

In the House of Commons, Mr. Grey proposed an amendment, expressing disapprobation of the protracted war in India, and regretting that the hopes on that subject, held out by his Majesty at the opening of the last session, were not yet realized.

In a desultory debate on this amendment, all the topics of the King's speech were treated on, and the war in India and the armament against Russia were made the grounds of subsequent motions. The principal subject, applicable to the speech itself, was an objection made by Mr. Grey to a recommendation from the throne to repeal taxes. It was exclusively the privilege of the House of Commons to originate measures for imposing or removing public burthens. By the King's speech, they were placed in an invidious position: should they reduce the taxes, they would be said to act under dictation; should they find such a measure inconsistent with their duty, they might be reproached with counteracting the benevolent intentions of the sovereign.

Mr. Fox.

Mr. Fox, supporting this argument, recommended a strict adherence to the principles of that constitution on which so many well-deserved encomiums had been made—encomiums to which he most cheerfully subscribed, when they were not introduced indirectly and unfairly, to create prejudice against other countries, or to convey censure on other persons.

Mr. Pitt.

To this objection, the obvious answer was given by Mr. Pitt. Had his Majesty specified any particular amount of taxes to be given up, or any mode of reduction, there might have been ground of jealousy; but he had merely suggested a confidence in the judgment and benevolence of the House.

Amendment
negatived.Observations
on the war in
India.

The amendment was negatived*.

On the motion for an address, as well as on a subsequent day, when Major Maitland required certain

papers, many reflections on the war in India were made; and it should be recollected that, at the time, nothing, subsequent to Earl Cornwallis's retreat to Bangalore, was known. Mr. Grey could see no cause for joy or approbation, unless retreats were to be considered as victories, miscarriages as success.

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The hopes that the war might speedily be brought to an honourable conclusion were of the less value, Mr. Fox observed, from having been held out last year and not fulfilled: "L'on désespère, quand on espère toujours." He cautioned the House against too hasty expressions of approbation. For the victory at Camden, the thanks of the House were voted to Lord Cornwallis, and fortunately arrived in sufficient time not to pass through the hands of an American general.

Mr. Fox.

Mr. Pitt observed, that were Mr. Fox's position just, that, pending a war, success or failure was not a proper subject either of approbation or blame, Marlborough would not have received the thanks of his country after the battle of Blenheim, or Rodney after the glorious twelfth of April. He did not recollect that Mr. Fox had used the same arguments when thanks were voted to a near friend and connexion of his own—to Admiral Keppel for the 27th of July.

Mr. Pitt.

Major Maitland said the war was pernicious in its tendency, and fatal in its effect. We had no longer the recovery of tranquillity in our own hands, but were wholly in the power of allies, whose sole object was rapine and plunder; who were equally desirous to enrich themselves and to obtain benefit from our wealth and the pillage of the enemy.

Many reflections were made against Lord Cornwallis, both as a warrior and a negotiator; and, in enforcing them, Mr. Francis asserted that the noble Lord, with a force sufficient to conquer twenty Tippoo's, had taken an Indian fort, beaten an Indian chief, and then been compelled to burst his cannon, destroy his military stores, abandon his camp, and retire to save his whole army from perishing by famine. He bestowed no less censure on General Abercromby. A loan had been promised to the Mahrattas. "A loan!"

Mr. Francis.

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he exclaimed ; “ it might as well have been called by “ its proper name—a gift. I should like to see a note “ of hand from Purseram Bow, or a bond and judgment “ executed by Hurry Punt. I should as much expect “ to be paid by a highwayman, who had robbed me on “ Hounslow Heath and promised to refund whenever “ he was in cash. The uniform practice of the Mah- “ rattas is to take all they can get, and to quarrel for “ the rest.”

To these observations, only general answers could be applied.

Sir James Murray and Mr. Dundas vindicated the character of General Abercromby and Lord Cornwallis ; and, in conclusion, some of the papers were ordered, others withheld : no division appears.

Papers res-
pecting Russia.

Feb. 6.

20th.
Motion by
Earl Fitzwil-
liam.

In pursuance of a promise made at the commence- ment of the session, papers relating to the negotiation with Russia were submitted to Parliament*, and occa- sioned several debates in both Houses.

Earl Fitzwilliam, complaining of the insufficiency of the documents, proposed resolutions, asserting, as uncontroverted facts, that the Empress had been un- justly attacked and provoked, and our negotiations, although enforced by the weight of a great naval armament, had produced no effect, but that of extend- ing the calamities of war for two unnecessary and destructive campaigns, exposing our honour, cramping the extent and endangering the safety of our com- merce.

Feb. 20, 27,
29.
March 1.

The debate is chiefly remarkable for a speech of great eloquence, information, and wit, from the Earl of Guildford. The motion was lost†. In this dis- cussion, as in those which afterward took place on the same subject, many able speeches were delivered, and many sound political truths enforced ; but, as no error was to be remedied, nor any prospective advantage in- dicated, little interest attaches to the details ; but some occasional incidents and observations are selected.

* See the titles of some papers, and others in substance, Journals, vol. xxvii. pp. 20—387.

† 82 to 19

Mr. Grey, in moving for additional papers, censured the confidence pending negotiations, and confidence after their conclusion, by which the minister appeared to have gained from the House a general indemnity. To this reproach, Mr. Pitt, without derogating from the acknowledged rights of the House of Commons, maintained that, if ministers were to publish all their information, they might, by disclosures relating to different states, effect the dissolution of all alliances, and the irreparable destruction of all treaties. If a reasonable degree of confidence were not reposed in them, there could be no regular government; every thing would be left to the will of individuals, and the name of method would be given to anarchy and confusion.

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20th.

Mr. Pitt.

The motion was rejected by a large majority*.

On a motion by Lord Porchester, blaming ministers for continuing the preparation of a naval force after they had determined not to employ it, but to accept the conditions offered by the court of Petersburg, Earl Stanhope took occasion to point out the advantages of an alliance with France. They derived from us all that was excellent in their constitution, all that tended to give freedom, happiness, and security. They had felt a growing attachment to this country; and with them the name of an Englishman was become popular. By cultivating this friendship, we might preserve the balance of Europe, and awe neighbouring states from projects of aggrandizement and ambition.

27th.

These unfounded assertions would by themselves have claimed little notice; but Lord Grenville, in a general opposition to the motion, described the ambitious efforts of Russia to drive the Turks out of Europe, and, making herself mistress of the Black Sea, to become a formidable naval power. To the favour of this country she owed her weight as a maritime state; the return she had made during the last war, was too well known; and the Lord Chancellor displayed the low policy which had disgraced the cabinet of France toward the Turks even since the reign of Francis the First.

Opposed by
Lord Grenville.

Lord Chancellor.

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29th.

March 1.

Motion by Mr.
Whitbread.

A contest, maintained with greater ability, took place on a motion by Mr. Whitbread, for resolutions declaring that ministers had been guilty of gross misconduct. The mover expressed great indignation at the absurd and ridiculous purpose for which the money of his constituents had been extorted from them, and the degradation to which the British name had been reduced. In the late dispute, there was, in the conduct of ministers, something of the gigantic—an appearance of menace and greatness; but, as they had stalked into the business giants, they had slunk out, the merest pigmies that ever disgraced a political theatre. He contrasted with that of Mr. Pitt, the conduct of the Duke of Leeds, who, when thwarted in the execution of his project, true to his principles, and regardless of the emoluments of office or the fascination of power, departed from a situation which he thought he could no longer fill with honour to himself or advantage to his country. But the minister had made a comparison between his opinion and his place, and elected the latter, sacrificing to a momentary popularity the conviction of his own mind—to his love of power, the approbation of his own understanding.

Mr. Jenkinson

The cause of government was first defended by the honourable Robert Banks Jenkinson, in a maiden speech, which, as Mr. Sheridan truly observed, gave more than a promise of senatorial eminence. He displayed our necessity for maintaining continental connexions; to keep Holland, our natural ally, from falling into the hands of France, our natural rival. The Turks might be termed the aggressors, as they had first commenced active hostilities; but, considering the strong provocations on the part of Russia, the justice and propriety of their conduct could not be disputed. He then reviewed the conduct of the Empress, in obtaining the Crimea; in promoting a rebellion in Egypt; in laying claim to Bessarabia, Wallachia, and Moldavia; and the repeated concessions to which she compelled the Turks to agree, until at last war had become unavoidable for the preservation of

their dominions in Europe : such circumstances justified all the proceedings of government.

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Mr. Grey repeated an old observation on the unimportance of the balance of power to the poor tenant of a thatched cottage. Ministers had begun with arrogance and injustice, and concluded by pusillanimity and meanness. The Empress derided our pretensions and menaces, and the Turks, whom we affected to support, but afterward betrayed, had given the highest proof of their abhorrence and contempt of our conduct. He had procured, as the best information on the subject, a copy of the Grand Vizier's answer to Sir Robert Ainslie, our ambassador at Constantinople ; and he proceeded to read this supposed document, which was a general and vapid declamation against Christians in general, and the English in particular ; against the Christian religion and its Founder, and against all ministers of European sovereigns, and especially Mr. Pitt. In the most lofty terms he declined our friendship, and disavowed all connexion with us.

1791.
Mr. Grey.

An adjournment of the debate having taken place, Mr. Pitt, on the subject of this apocryphal rant, observed, that it had been introduced without a date either of time or place, without a statement to whom it was addressed, by whom written, or for what purpose. He had made diligent inquiry at the proper offices ; but, although he could not find a trace of any such letter, he had found two or three recent addresses from the Ottoman Court, expressed in terms directly the reverse of those used in the paper produced.

Mr. Fitt.

It is, indeed, difficult to conceive how such a paper could be presented to the attention of Parliament by a gentleman of high attainments and character. It is a fabrication too clumsy for an imposture, to dull for a joke.*

Mr. Sheridan expressed his astonishment at the contemptuous silence of the minister, that consistency of insult, that climax of haughtiness, with which he had treated the House, and now refused to answer on the

Mr. Sheridan.

* It may be found at length in the Parliamentary History, vol. xxix. p. 933. No member of opposition referred to it as worthy of credit or notice.

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day of his trial. If his friends averred that he yielded to the opinion of the House, they must be told that the majority was with him; if to the opinion of the public, that opinion was against his arming. If he was wrong in his principle, he ought to be disgraced; if right, he ought to be impeached for abandoning it. If his own majority forgave him, the minority readily might. To them he had bowed, as the organ of the public voice; to the others he said, in deeds more forcible than words, "I know what stuff my majority is made of, and how little its voice can be called the voice of the public." To get themselves out of the dilemma in which they were placed, ministers had prayed only for the free navigation of the Dniester as a *radoucissement* (this was the term for a sweetener) to satisfy the people. The Empress made it a stipulation that they should go to the Porte with the same demand. Mr. Sheridan, with great wit and pleasantry, depicted the entry of the Grand Vizier (Mr. Pitt) into the divan, accompanied by his Reis Effendi (Mr. Dundas); the inquiries which expectation would have taught the Grand Signor to make, and the melancholy "No" that must have been the perpetual answer; to preserve a haughty appearance of character for himself, when he had sacrificed the dignity of his royal master, and the fleet of England was made to ride in affected pomp, but in truth a disgraceful array, at Spithead, exhibiting in novel manœuvres the zig-zag type of his own crooked conduct.

Mr. Fox.

Mr. Fox supported the motion with a speech eminently eloquent, argumentative, profound; it embraced all views of the question, historical, political, and commercial; controverted all the statements on the opposite side, drawn from the facts disclosed by the papers or illustrated by ancient or modern history, and his censures of the minister were most severe, pointed, and bitter.

Mr. Pitt.

Mr. Pitt met these arguments with a candid acknowledgment of the great ability and eloquence which had been displayed; but shewed the many points in which both Mr. Fox and Mr. Sheridan had

used misrepresentations ; to refute them all, he observed, would form the employment of an entire debate. With considerable pleasantry, he congratulated Mr. Fox on the triumphs he had experienced in other places ; and, in answer to Mr. Sheridan's question as to what honours he imagined he should be received with, if he went to Petersburg, he said he scarcely imagined he should have the honour of being placed in a gallery between the two greatest orators of Greece and Rome.

Mr. Fox, with considerable earnestness, answered, that if any foreign sovereign, in friendship with this country, should pay him the compliment to think well of him and testify it by marks of distinction, he should always feel himself highly gratified. The resolutions were negatived.*

In these debates, it is little to say that all the advantage was on the side of opposition ; unsolicited interference, pretensions advanced and abandoned, an expensive armament, voted but never used, and terms of peace dictated by the belligerent whose conduct they had affected to control ; such were the allegations against ministers ; while the lash, without sparing, was laid on them. But the victory of opposition produced to them only their shout of triumph. In the debates, nothing was omitted, either in the form of invective or taunt, to convince ministers that they ought humbly to acknowledge their incapacity, and resign situations for which they had proved themselves unfit ; but the ministers did not obey this summons ; the House, when appealed to, had given them proof of confidence by rather increasing their majority ; the public were not affected by the question ; no meeting of a corporate or other body was called to address the Throne or petition Parliament ; the little interest that ever existed soon subsided ; and Ockzakow, in a very short time, presented no topic either for an argument or a joke.

Confiding in the permanence of peace, government, without any strong opposition, reduced the effective

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Observations.

Feb. 15.
Reduction in
the army.

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1791.

17th.
Proposed re-
peal of taxes.

military force from about thirty thousand to somewhat less than twenty-five thousand men, improving their pay, without additional burthen on the public.

Referring to the King's speech, Mr. Pitt congratulated Parliament, that immediate, substantial relief might be afforded to a large portion of their constituents, while additional security and effect were given to the important, and, he trusted, inviolable system, for reduction of the national debt. From the progressive increase of revenue in the last four years, he assumed, that, by diminishing the expenditure in the navy, army, and several other particulars, a disposable surplus of four hundred and eighty-six thousand pounds would remain, which he proposed to apply, in equal proportions, in annulling taxes, and extinguishing the debt. In fifteen years, the sinking fund would amount to four millions a year, after which, it was no longer to accumulate; and unquestionably there never was a time when, from the situation of Europe, we might more reasonably expect fifteen years of peace. The fund, he thought, should not cease to accumulate until the interest of the capital were discharged, and the amount of expired annuities should, together with the annual million, amount to four millions. But in case of future loans, to avoid the state of apprehended bankruptcy, he proposed that, in all such cases, except where sums were raised by annuities terminable in a moderate number of years, an additional annual sum should be issued to the commissioners, sufficient to pay off the capital, in the same period as the sinking fund would discharge what would then remain of the present debt. The imposts he proposed to repeal were the temporary duty on malt, passed in the last session; the tax on female servants, which was levied from ninety thousand families; on carts and waggons, which affected about an equal number; and on houses having less than seven windows.

Mr. Sheridan.

Against the minister's plan, nothing was raised which had the appearance of a solid objection. Mr. Sheridan, with his usual felicity, held it up to ridicule as

an attempt to substitute figures of rhetoric for those of arithmetic; and endeavoured to invalidate some of the statements, to diminish the value of the proposed results, and to decry the policy which first made taxes necessary and then claimed applause for reducing them.

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When explained more in detail, Mr. Pitt's plan for preventing the accumulation of the national debt in case of future loans, was, that the sum to be raised to pay the interest should bear a proportion to the amount of the debt incurred, and the time when it ought to be paid, according to the plan laid down in 1786; namely, a term of forty-six years. To do this, one hundredth part of the capital borrowed would be sufficient. He trusted the period was not distant, when the country might look to have its burthens removed, its resources enlarged, and its growing opulence confirmed.

March 30.

The general objection made to this measure by Mr. Fox, was, that it bound posterity to the performance of a particular act, although they would possess better information at the time than could be derived from anticipation. In answer, it was said that this bill would not bind posterity more than any other permanent law: future legislatures, considering its benefits and its inconveniences, would retain or repeal it, according to the exigency of the times*.

Mr. Fox.

One debate on the minister's plan arose in the House of Lords, which is only entitled to notice as producing the last effusion of parliamentary eloquence from the Earl of Guildford. Age and infirmity had not depressed his spirits, or abated the vigour of his understanding. He professed to speak of the country and its condition as he would have spoken ten years before, when he was in office. Whether it had been wise or not to impose the taxes now sought to be rescinded, he would not inquire; but he was of opinion that the sum received from the people for the support of the public safety ought not to be taken off, leaving to ministers, at a future day, a task which he had ever found most disagreeable, that of proposing taxes. In

March 6.
Debate in the
Lords.

Conclusion of
Lord Guild-
ford's parlia-
mentary life.

* The plan is said to have been suggested many years before by Dr. Price. See Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*, vol. iv.

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the present situation of the country, no object could be so beneficial, or demand so absolute a preference, as the reduction of the national debt. He did not view its present amount with the terror generally felt ; but was more apprehensive of the danger of its increasing, and at last becoming too great to be borne. Notwithstanding all the taxes, the people had much more left for their own comfort than they possessed a century ago. The resources of the country were still such, that, if called upon for exertion, she would not be found inadequate. To what extent we could proceed, he knew not. God forbid we should make the experiment ! Both when in office and afterward, he had maintained unpopular doctrines on finance : he was too old to change his opinion, nor should it now receive a bias from the consideration of popularity. He had received a lesson upon that subject, too plain to be misunderstood, too severe to be forgotten ; he was taught that popularity was at an end with him, and he gave his opinion totally without feeling on that point. He wished the people of this country as much wealth, comfort, and felicity for ever, as they now enjoyed. They were free, opulent, and happy, and they should bear their burthens cheerfully, for the purpose of reducing the national debt, if they wished the country to preserve and enjoy its freedom and its happiness for ages to come*.

March 7.
Provision for
the Duke of
York.

As a provision for the Duke of York, Mr. Pitt moved that eighteen thousand pounds should be the annual allowance ; and, in case the Duchess should survive, eight thousand should be settled on her. Mr. Fox contended that a certain sum of money should first be granted, and afterward an additional annuity. The money requisite for fitting up his town residence might, without extravagance, be forty thousand pounds, which he could only raise by the aid of those who, in lending, make a prey of young men of fashion. Supposing the marriage to produce children, they would

* On the fifth of August following, the noble Earl died, leaving a numerous body of friends to regret his wit, urbanity, and kindness of heart ; and, as nearly as such an assertion can be made of any human being, especially one who had so long filled an exalted and invidious station, not a single enemy.

be left without provision, dependent on the Crown or on Parliament.

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All other members did not view the question with the same liberality. Mr. Burdon thought ten thousand pounds a year sufficient; an opinion in which he was countenanced by Mr. Matthew Montagu, Mr. William Smith, and by Sir James Johnstone, who adverted to the annual revenue of the bishoprick of Osnaburgh, stating it at thirty-five thousand pounds, while Sir William Dolben estimated it ten or twelve thousand, and Mr. M. A. Taylor at not more than half that sum. Mr. Fox strongly deprecated, as totally unusual, the allusion to any foreign income belonging to the Royal Family. His Majesty's revenue from his Hanoverian possessions never had been taken into consideration, nor, in fact, had the House any right to consider the subject. An irresistible reason for excluding it from consideration appeared in the inconsistency shewn in the statements of the supposed amount, fluctuating between five and thirty-five thousand pounds per annum.

1791.
Animadver-
sions.

The bill passed, and was presented to his Majesty, with an appropriate speech by the Speaker.

An action, which had recently been tried at Westminster, formed the ground of several debates. It was brought by George Smith, the keeper of a public house in Westminster, against Mr. Rose, one of the secretaries to the Treasury, for one hundred and five guineas, being at the rate of half-a-guinea a day, for his work and labour in detecting unqualified voters, who had polled for Lord John Townshend during the contest in 1788. The principal witness for the plaintiff was John Frost, an attorney, who had been agent for Lord Hood in that election, and solicitor to the Stamp Office, but, for very sufficient reasons, dismissed. A sanction on the part of Mr. Rose, if not an original employment, having been proved, the jury, under the direction of Lord Kenyon, found a verdict, giving to the plaintiff the whole amount of his demand.

Action against
Mr. Rose.

A transaction so ordinary and unimportant would have claimed little attention, had it not been complicated with other circumstances, by the aid of which

Motion by Mr.
Thompson.

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March 13.

it was hoped to establish against government the charge of misusing official powers for election purposes. Mr. Thompson introduced the matter to the House of Commons, as one of the greatest moment. It appeared in evidence, he said, that Smith had been convicted in a penalty of fifty pounds for an offence against the excise laws; but a part of it was remitted, in consequence of services performed in the election. After some further observations, "I have," said Mr. Thompson, "put George Rose, Esquire, fairly "on his trial, and God send him a good deliverance!" He then moved that the House should resolve itself into a committee to inquire into all abuses committed by persons in office at the election for Westminster, relating to penalties incurred under the excise laws or lottery act.

Mr. Lambton.

In his speech, the mover omitted the lottery act; but the defect was supplied by Mr. Lambton, who, in seconding the motion, said that, in 1788, one Hoskins, being in prison at the suit of the solicitor to the lottery, for seven hundred pounds incurred as penalties, promised to procure fifty or sixty votes for Lord Hood, if such bail as he could produce might pass without objection; but the solicitor declined compliance, without authority from a higher quarter. The man was allowed to put in as bail two of the most miserable ragamuffins that ever presented themselves; yet their bail was taken. Hoskins did actually poll for Lord Hood sixty votes; and then both he and his bail disappeared, and had never afterward been heard of.

Mr. Rose expressed astonishment at the honourable mover's credulity in venturing so solemnly to bring before the House charges so utterly devoid of truth. Smith was the keeper of a livery stable, from whom Mr. Rose had been in the habit of hiring horses, but had never seen him until 1789, when he sent him a petition, which stated that he had been convicted in a penalty of fifty pounds, incurred through ignorance, by brewing small beer in his own house for the use of his family. One third of the penalty was applicable to the poor of the parish, one third to the informer,

and the other to the Crown. The vestry of St. Martin's, he said, were willing to give up their third, provided he could procure the remission of the portion due to the King. The petition had been referred to the Board of Excise, who decided that all the allegations were untrue; that Smith was not a poor man, but had wilfully and knowingly transgressed the law; that his contrivances were most artful, and his malpractices of such extent and continuance, that five hundred pounds, instead of fifty, would not have been a penalty adequate to his delinquencies; the result was, that half the sum had been levied, and the remainder was to be paid by instalments. With respect to Hoskins and his sham bail, he protested he had never even heard of the man's name before that day, nor was it likely that Lord Hood would have been an assenting party to a transaction so disgraceful.

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Lord Hood declared that he had never heard of Hoskins in his life. As to Mr. Frost, he had brought an action for his bill on the Westminster election. It was referred to arbitrators, who, from a demand of three thousand eight hundred pounds, struck off all but one thousand; and Mr. Frost's own referee had declared that the sum allowed was amply sufficient.

Lord Hood.

Mr. Grey, pressing the motion, produced a note, dated April 1789, from Mr. Rose to Mr. Smith, appointing him to meet Mr. Vivian, the solicitor of the Excise, at eight o'clock the next morning, at his own house in Palace Yard. This note could not in any way affect the election that had terminated in the preceding July; and as, in April, no petition had been presented against Lord John Townshend's return, any information respecting false votes must have been utterly useless. The member for Liverpool, Mr. Gascoyne, who had been named as having introduced Smith to Mr. Rose, said that he had recommended him as an object of compassion; but he had reason to believe him an impostor.

Mr. Grey.

Mr. Pitt requested that, as the committee was to inquire into "practices of gentlemen high in office," those persons might be distinctly named. Mr. Fox

Mr. Pitt.

Mr. Fox.

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Mr. Pitt.

answered, that, as the committee was only to inquire and not to fix the imputation of guilt, it was not necessary to name any person; and he detailed at length the facts which he expected would be proved. Mr. Pitt still opposed the motion, observing, that to his question, instead of an answer, he had received an argument. Would the supporters of the motion undertake to make out any criminal charge against "gentlemen high in office." Although a friend to sober and rational investigation, he would not vote for a criminal inquiry upon conjecture, surprise, or insinuation.

Mr. Lambton.

Mr. Lambton, in reply, said that Mr. Frost, in his bill to Lord Hood, had charged "to the expense of finding bail in the action against Hoskins, who engaged to bring up sixty votes, three guineas;" but he still declined naming any person whom he meant to accuse.

The Attorney-General.

The Attorney-General gave a death blow to this part of the case, stating, as his official knowledge well enabled him, that the sum for which Hoskins was sued was merely a debt claimed by Mr. Frost as an individual. Had it been any thing in which government was concerned, Mr. Frost must have consulted him as to the bail; but, on his own account, he had brought actions against different persons on the lottery acts, for penalties to the amount of eight or nine thousand pounds, merely to found a charge upon the Stamp Office of two thousand pounds. These actions were instituted and compromised in a most scandalous manner.

Mr. Windham.

Mr. Windham compared the supposed purity and virtue of the administration, as contrasted with their true character, to the uncased Frenchman which the licentiousness of our stage too often exhibited to ridicule; in ruffles without a shirt; in tinsel and lace on the outside; in dirt and dowlas within*.

Petition on the subject.

On a division, the motion was rejected†. An at-

* In subsequent periods of his life, this phrase was well remembered, and quoted to the disadvantage of the speaker.

† 221 to 84.

tempt was made to give fresh vitality to this exhausted fiction, by a petition from several electors of Westminster, praying for solemn inquiry. It was presented by Mr. Fox, who moved for a committee; his motion was negatived*.

On proposals to improve the representation of the people in the lower House, two debates arose. Mr. Sheridan moved for a committee on the petitions and papers before Parliament relative to the Royal Burghs of Scotland†. The petitioners complained of general mismanagement, misapplication of money, dilapidation of property, and various wrongs arising from the usurped authority of self-elected magistrates, for which the laws of Scotland afforded no redress. He wished to abolish this self-electing power, as the only means of obtaining justice; for all attempts at palliation would be fruitless. He deprecated general objections arising from a dislike of reform, and particularly called on the Lord-Advocate of Scotland, Mr. Robert Dundas, from motives of duty and personal honour, to consent to this inquiry, not sheltering himself under flimsy evasions and petty cavils. He must know that inquiry would produce truth—truth would demand justice—justice would be fatal to his cause.

The Lord-Advocate, rejecting with manly disdain any popularity that might be gained by supporting the motion, despising any unpopularity that might attend opposition to it, divided the complaints in the petitions into three branches: first, that the inhabitants of the burghs were liable to the illegal exaction of taxes; secondly, that there were instances of gross misrule

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April 4.
May 3.
Mr. Fox's
motion.
April 12.

Lord Advo-
cate.

* 81 to 34.

† A Royal Burgh is a corporate body erected by the Sovereign, composed of the inhabitants of a certain tract. It is constituted by a charter, under which the magistracy hold of the Crown the property of the borough for behoof of the inhabitants, and to whom they give and renew those titles which the transmission of property requires. The power of election of the office bearers or magistrates was originally in the burgesses. But this power was by statute given to the magistrates and council, according to what is termed the *set* of the borough. Before the union, the city of Edinburgh sent two, and every other Royal Borough one, representative to the Scottish Parliament; but, by the articles of union, fifteen representatives of boroughs only were sent to the Parliament of Great Britain, of whom the city of Edinburgh elected one, and the other fourteen representatives were chosen by fourteen different districts of boroughs, into which the other Royal Boroughs of Scotland were classed.

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and misconduct by the magistrates; lastly, that there was no court of judicature in Scotland capable of affording redress.

The first two propositions were entirely unfounded; the last he admitted, so far as respected the production of accounts; and if a specific proposition was brought forward to remedy that defect, he would most willingly support it, if the long-established system of the burghs were left unimpaired.

Motion lost.

Mr. Fox supported, Mr. Anstruther and Mr. Dundas opposed, the motion. Urged by the objections of Mr. Pitt, the honourable mover changed the form of his resolution; and, when he had done so, it was lost on a division*.

April 26.
Mr. Grey's
notice of a
motion for
reform.

In conformity with a resolution of the society called "Friends of the People," Mr. Grey gave notice, that in the next session he should make a motion for a reform in the representation of the people.

Mr. Pitt.

Contrary to the usage of Parliament, this notice, when there was no motion or question, produced a long and animated conversation. Mr. Pitt admitted the propriety of a reform, if it could be obtained without danger or mischief, by a general concurrence, pointing harmlessly at its object; but if it were conceded at this moment, he feared, that the stability of all the blessings we enjoyed would be shaken to the foundation. If additional security for the enjoyment of existing blessings could be afforded, it would be an improvement; he did not believe there was any existing grievance, but as much happiness as a rational man ought to hope for. Propositions of reform, issued in the shape of advertisements in newspapers, inviting the public as it were to repair to the standard, should be reprobated. Those to which he alluded were sanctioned by the very name of the gentleman who had given the present notice; and he had seen, with concern, that members of that House were connected with some who professed not reform alone, but direct hostility to our constitution; whose published opinions were libels on the form of

government, the succession to the throne, the hereditary titles of nobility, and portended the total destruction of all subordination in the state. To promote such a plan would be to follow a madness which had been called liberty in another country; a condition at war with freedom and good order; one to which despotism itself was preferable; a state in which liberty could not exist for a day: if it appeared in the morning, it must perish before sunset.

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Mr. Fox said, that however unpopular the words "parliamentary reform" might be within the walls of that House, the public regarded them in a very different view: at a former time he had been less sanguine on the subject than Mr. Pitt; but he happened to be a little more consistent. Early in life, he had formed his opinion on the necessity of parliamentary reform, and he still retained it. Unless something were done to quiet the minds of the people, there would be difficulty in long preserving internal tranquillity. Of the books that had been alluded to he had not read many; there were two well-known pamphlets, written by a gentleman who had distinguished himself as an author during the American war, a native of that country, of the name of Paine. One he had read; the other he had not; but he could not suppose we were so far reduced, that the constitution would be in any great danger from a libel by a foreigner*. He might be asked, why his name was not in the list of the society for reform? His reason was, that, although he saw great and enormous grievances, he did not see the remedy. Had his honourable friend consulted him, he should have hesitated before he recommended him to take the part he had; but yet he could not see why the present period was improper for the discussion. He praised the French for having changed a detestable government; and spoke of the liberty of Poland, and the justice, commerce, wealth, and prosperity, which prevailed in America. Changes also had

Mr. Fox.

* In this Mr. Fox was mistaken: Paine was a native of Thetford in Norfolk. The fact is so well known, that the mistake is pointed out only that it may not appear to be adopted.

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been effected in this country, and always with improvement. The world was rapidly improving in science, in knowledge, and in virtue; and as philosophy was spreading her light around every part of the globe, England alone, he hoped, would not remain enveloped in the darkness of bigotry. The principle in our constitution most to be admired, was that which admitted every improvement to be grafted on it with safety. The Crown had been curtailed of its prerogative, the Lords and the Commons had had their privileges reduced; he saw no danger, therefore, in continued reform, and had no difficulty in declaring himself a friend to all improvements.

Mr. Burke.

Mr. Burke, comparing himself to an invalid, who, too infirm for foreign service, was put upon garrison duty, felt this to be a time when he ought to come forward. In a speech of considerable length and great ability, he objected to the motion. Paine's book, he said, had been very properly termed by Mr. Fox a seditious and infamous libel against the constitution*. He believed there were in the country avowed enemies to the constitution. A cry of "name them! name them!" being raised, Mr. Burke begged gentlemen not to distress themselves by the repetition of calls with which he could not comply. He had not called upon them when they had made much stronger allusions: however, he would satisfy their curiosity, by stating that Paine's pamphlet was an infamous libel on the constitution; and, therefore, those clubs and societies who commanded that it should be read by the people, were the avowed enemies of the constitution. There were, in this country, men who scrupled not to enter into alliance with those worst of traitors and regicides, the club of Jacobins. Agents had been sent to enter into a federation with that iniquitous society; and those agents were men of some consideration in this country: he alluded particularly to Thomas Cooper

* In a speech in explanation, Mr. Fox denied having used the words "seditious and infamous." The epithets, if erroneously stated, were hardly worth the trouble. A libel on the constitution must be seditious, and may justly be termed infamous.

and James Watt. He likewise named Mr. Walker of Manchester, and read the addresses of these persons to the Jacobin Club, professing that there were clubs in this country who bound themselves in a federation with those regicides. Did these persons give only their own sentiments? No. By the answer of the Jacobin Club, it appeared that those worthies of Manchester undertook, from what authority he knew not, to represent all England. He then made severe remarks on the National Assembly of France, among whom he did not believe there were six men who possessed a hundred pounds a year.

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Mr. Erskine vindicated the part he had taken in the association, declaring that rather than see any injury done to the constitution, he would return to the military profession, and fight and perish for it. In answer to any other apprehensions, he should only apply the opinion of Dr. Johnson, that "to suggest an idea of our constitution being overthrown by a rabble, was to suppose that a city may be destroyed by the inundation of its own kennels."

Mr. Erskine.

Mr. Lambton, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Baker, Mr. William Smith, and Mr. Francis, who had signed the association paper, defended their conduct; and Mr. Michael Angelo Taylor avowed that, although in 1785 he had voted against reform, he had now changed his opinion. A compensation may be deemed to have been made for the defection of this gentleman, by the conduct of Mr. Windham, Lord North, Mr. Powys, and Sir Francis Bassett, who left the side of their usual associates, and declared their disapprobation of the motion. Mr. Ryder, Mr. Dundas, and some other members, announced similar opinions; and, there being no question before the House, the conversation dropped.

Other members.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTY-FIFTH.

1792.

Exertions respecting the slave trade.—Non-consumption associations.—Mr. Wilberforce's motion.—Debate.—Period of abolition fixed.—A bill passes the House of Commons.—Debated in the House of Lords.—Speech of the Duke of Clarence.—Evidence ordered.—The bill lost by the expiring of the session.—Police of Middlesex.—Leave given to bring in a bill.—Debate on it.—Bill passes.—Observations. Law of libel.—Bill formerly brought in.—Exertions of Mr. Erskine at the bar.—Mr. Fox produces his bill—it passes the House of Commons—lapses in the House of Lords—reproduced—passes the lower House—opposed by the Lord Chancellor—opinion of the Judges taken.—Earl Camden—Committee.—Bill passed.—Petition of Unitarians.—Mr. Fox's motion—debate—rejected.—Motion by Mr. Whitbread on the Birmingham riots—rejected.—Proclamation respecting seditious publications.—Interference of M. Chauvelin.—Answer of Lord Grenville—reply.—Proclamation discussed in Parliament.—Address moved by the Master of the Rolls.—Amendment moved by Mr. Grey.—Debate. Friends of the People.—Paine's Rights of Man, part the second.—Amendment negatived.—Debate in the House of Lords.—Speech of the Prince of Wales.—Protest.—Lord Lauderdale challenges the Duke of Richmond.—Duel prevented.—He fights with General Arnold.—Close of the session.

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FROM the important nature of passing events, the excited state of the public mind with relation to affairs both foreign and domestic, and from the desire felt by government of creating useful, and improving defective, institutions, while they restrained attempts at ruinous

reforms, it ensued that the session of Parliament was long and active, that debates were highly animated, and the appeals both to the wisdom of the senate and the passions of the people unusually strenuous.

Some abatement appearing to have taken place in the enthusiasm which at first displayed itself respecting the abolition of the slave trade, it having become, as it was thought, a commercial, rather than a moral, question, great pains were taken to revive the waning spirit. A pamphlet, containing portions of the evidence which had been given before the Privy Council, and before Parliament, accompanied with a recommendation to abstain from West India sugar and rum, was ably compiled and profusely circulated*, and its effect was prodigious. Individuals of all ranks, religions, and parties, adopted the resolution. Three hundred thousand persons renounced the use of sugar†. Numerous petitions were signed in the country; and, in the city of London, notwithstanding the opposition of the Lord Mayor and several Aldermen, a common hall was appointed, and most numerous attended. The voices of those who opposed the petition were drowned amidst groans and hisses. It had not been signed more than half an hour before it was within the walls of the House of Commons, barely in time to aid Mr. Wilberforce's renewed motion. Adverse petitions were presented; but the general result was—for regulation, one; against all abolition, four; and for total abolition, five hundred and nineteen‡.

Thus encouraged and supported, Mr. Wilberforce, in a committee of the whole House, moved a resolution, that the African slave trade ought to be abolished, declaring that he intended to follow it by a bill to the same effect, to take place from a time to be fixed by the House. He disclaimed any view of an immediate emancipation. The negroes were not fitted for such a change; but their situation might be greatly improved. Their condition, as to punishment, and total absence

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Exertions respecting the slave trade.

Non-consumption association.

Petitions.

April 2.
Mr. Wilberforce's motion.

* The author was Mr. William Fox; and two hundred and fifty thousand copies were issued.

† Clarkson's *History of the Abolition*, vol. ii. p. 349.

‡ Clarkson, vol. ii. p. 352; Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*, vol. iv. p. 235.

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of all legal protection, was indeed most wretched: being totally under the control of the whites, if they had claims, or were aggrieved, they could appeal for redress only to their oppressors.

After descanting on the severity of their labours, and referring to the late transactions in St. Domingo, he proceeded to consider the manner of obtaining slaves in Africa. On this head, after the debates of the preceding year, he acknowledged that little novelty could be produced; but he treated on the wars waged for the sole purpose of acquiring slaves, supported, and even carried on, by Europeans. By their incitement, an African chief would send soldiers by night to fire a village, and make captives of the flying and affrighted inhabitants; and this they called making trade.

He insisted that the number of slaves in the colonies was already excessive, and that an increase would only introduce additional dangers; if supplies were required, it arose from the want of provision for the regular means of increasing the species. The morals of the slaves were not only neglected, but corrupted; all decency being discarded from intercourse: indeed, in every point of view, they were regarded and treated as animals of a species distinct from man.

Nor would the extinction of this commerce diminish the number of sailors; for, instead of being a nursery, it was the destruction, of seamen; as death and desertion carried off not less than five-sixths of those who were employed in it.

He did not intend to expatiate on the cruelties of the middle passage; but, from the evidence, it appeared that the mortality was frightful. One cause assigned by Captain Wilson, a master of one of these vessels, was a fixed melancholy and dejection, which made the unhappy captives wish to die: unless compelled by blows, they refused to eat; and sometimes, when not prevented by a high netting, threw themselves overboard, calling such a death an escape.

In proof that their situation was little improved by the regulations of Sir William Dolben's act, he cited the case of a negro girl of fifteen, who lost her life

under circumstances of cruelty and immodesty too horrible for recital, through the savage barbarity of a Captain Kimber*. Tyranny and ferocity were equally extended to the seamen ; so that, out of a whole ship's crew, six or seven only returned. Who could regulate a trade carried on by such agents ? Whichever way it was looked at, robbery, murder, perfidy, and desolation, stared one in the face. The people of England had expressed their sense against it fully and forcibly, and had invoked the House, as they valued the favour of the Supreme Being, to abolish it. The recent enormities appeared to have been permitted by Heaven for the purpose of rendering it impossible that any one should dare to justify the continuation of a traffic necessarily productive of crimes that admitted neither of excuse nor palliation.

A debate ensued, which was not terminated until six o'clock in the morning. The motion was resisted by Mr. Baillie, agent for Grenada, Mr. Vaughan, Colonel Tarleton, and Mr. Jenkinson. On the opposite side were Mr. Thornton, Mr. Montagu, Mr. Whitbread, Mr. Fox, and Mr. Pitt. Without affecting to analyse their arguments, or to recapitulate all assertions and contradictions, a few points may be selected.

Debate.

On the numerous petitions which crowded the table, it was observed, by Colonel Tarleton, that, in form and language, they bore a strong resemblance to each other, and appeared to be the manufacture of the sectaries of the Old Jewry. Mendicant physicians and itinerant preachers had exercised unexampled zeal and industry, and displayed the ingenuity of Scapin in extorting names from the sick, the indigent, and the traveller ; boys at grammar schools had been allured,

* The honourable member was well warranted in stating these matters as facts ; for three persons, who pretended to be eye-witnesses, had deposed to them in evidence before the committee, and had in private given him the strongest assurances that they were true ; but Mr Kimber was soon afterward (June 8) tried at an Admiralty session, before Mr. Justice Ashurst, on the charge of murder. All the witnesses appeared, and were examined ; but, upon their cross-examination, their narratives were so discordant, their infamy so evident, and the whole charge so obviously appeared to be the result of a conspiracy, that, without a moment's hesitation, the jury pronounced his acquittal ; and two of the witnesses were detained, by order of the Court, to be tried for perjury : one was convicted, the other fortunately escaped.

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by promises of a holiday, to sign names in the neighbourhood, as well as their own; and when the inhabitants could not furnish signatures sufficiently numerous, they had been desired to employ their imagination, to give to "airy nothing a local habitation" and a name."

It was also contended that the value of the evidence in favour of the abolition was overrated, and the publication of it altogether unfair and deceitful. The unprejudiced part of the House would consider the individuals brought forward on the part of the African merchants, quite as respectable, as unbiassed, and not less independent in character and situation than those on the other side. Allowing some exception as to that part of the evidence which applied to the West Indies, the general body of witnesses was composed of ill-informed, ignorant, and low men; many of them picked up in the streets of Liverpool and Bristol, where they were starving, and hired to give testimony which would mislead the public. Among those brought forward by the merchants and planters, were Lord Shuldhham, Admirals Barrington, Arbuthnot, Edwards, and Hotham, Commodore Gardner, Lord Macartney, Lord Rodney, Sir Ralph Payne, Sir J. Dalling, Sir Archibald Campbell, Mr. Baillie, Mr. Hibbert, and a long list of other respectable characters.

That the trade was highly important to the nation, was inferred from a series of acts and declarations of the legislature during more than a century, which, it was argued, afforded much safer grounds of conduct than the opinions of retired and speculative philosophers.

The calamities suffered in Africa did not arise from Great Britain only; an abolition of the trade on our own part would prove only a transfer of it. In the five years during which the disposition of a considerable part of this country had manifested itself, no other nation had displayed any congenial sentiment. The French, indeed, had proposed it in the National Assembly; but the abolition was rejected; the bounty on importation continued.

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Mr. Pitt.

To those arguments, Mr. Pitt answered, if the trade were as criminal as asserted, God forbid that we should hesitate in relinquishing it, even if it were persevered in by all the rest of the world. How was this enormous evil to be eradicated, if every nation thus prudentially awaited the concurrence of all others? How justly might other nations say, "why should we abolish this trade, which Great Britain, free, just, and honourable, and involved as she is in it above all countries, has refused to abolish?"

In answer to an argument which had been advanced, that slaves were obtained in consequence of legal judgments in African courts, or by the consequences of their own wilful depravity, Mr. Pitt said, "Even on the supposition that we take only convicts and prisoners of war, the evil is enormous. But, viewing the matter in another light, think of eighty thousand persons carried out of their native country, by we know not what means! for crimes imputed! for light or inconsiderable faults! for debt perhaps! for the crime of witchcraft! or on a thousand other weak and scandalous pretexts! Admitting that there may exist in Africa something like courts of justice; yet what an office of humiliation and meanness is it in us to take upon ourselves to carry into execution the iniquitous sentences of such courts! as if we also were strangers to all religion, and to the first principles of justice. Some witnesses say that the Africans are addicted to the practice of gambling, and they even sell their wives and children, and ultimately themselves. Are these, then, the legitimate sources of slavery? Shall we pretend that we can thus acquire an honest right to exact the labour of these people?"

In this debate, if it were not distinctly avowed, it was not concealed, that the emancipation of all slaves was a part of the object in view. Much, therefore, was said of the hardships and indignities which they had to suffer. Punishment without limit, wrongs without redress—for a slave could not be admitted as a witness against a white man,—a denial of all rational

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leisure, and a total absence of all religious instruction, were cited as circumstances which it was incumbent on us to relieve and to obviate. To these objections it was answered, that particular instances had been swelled into accustomed practices. Individuals might have been guilty of cruelty; but, in general, the proprietors acted toward their slaves on an opposite principle, giving them every possible indulgence. It was not ordained by law, but established by custom, that a large portion of Saturday and all Sunday were allowed them to work for their own benefit; and in those hours, it was said, they did more than in all the rest of the week. Mr. Fox, with his accustomed readiness and ingenuity, turned this observation against those by whom it was advanced. It was a proof of the high value of free or voluntary, above compulsory, labour.

Religious instruction was admitted to be extremely defective. Missionaries had produced some good; and were sound religious principles once instilled, there would be less punishment, more work performed, more marriages, more issue, and more attachment to their masters and to the government.

Mr. Dundas
proposes an
amendment.

At an advanced period of the debate, Mr. Dundas introduced, as a mitigated proposition, to insert in the first resolution the word "gradually," considering that regulations would procure the abolition in the most eligible manner. He wished, first, to promote the increase of native negroes; to aim at the extinction of hereditary slavery, and improvement in the condition of the slaves. And he hoped, by regulations for the education of children, greatly to facilitate the total annihilation of slavery. Mr. Addington supported these propositions, and suggested the propriety of encouraging, by means of dissimilar duties at the Custom House, the increased importation of females.

Mr. Addington

Mr. Fox.

27th.

Mr. Fox vehemently opposed this amendment, disclaiming any thing like moderation on such a subject: but it was carried*; and, on a subsequent night, the period fixed was 1796†, after the years 1800, 1793, and 1795, had been rejected.

* 193 to 125.

† 151 to 132.

A bill, framed in conformity with these resolutions, passed the House of Commons ; and its appearance in the Lords is rendered remarkable, as it occasioned the first speech of the Duke of Clarence. Having passed some years in the West Indies, not in the state of a prince of the blood, but in the frank and hearty intercourse of a British sailor, his Royal Highness had opportunities, better than many other persons, of knowing the real condition and treatment of the slaves.

He said he had in his possession proofs that the evidence given to the House of Commons was at least erroneous, if not worse. The negroes were not treated in the manner which had so much agitated the public mind ; but, as an attentive observer, he could say that, when the various ranks of society were considered, they were comparatively in a state of humble happiness ; and he deprecated an implicit obedience to the House of Commons, as destructive to the natural balance of the constitution, which he would never endure.

Many noble lords concurred in the opinion that their House could not be guided by evidence received and resolutions passed in the Commons. The Bishop of London and the Bishop of St. David's maintained that the slave trade was unfit to be carried on or protected by any nation professing religion, morality, or even common justice ; and that to talk of regulation or reform in its practice, was an idle waste of words : but, finally, notwithstanding objections on the ground of delay, it was resolved that witnesses should be examined*. Seven only had been called, when further proceeding was necessarily postponed until the next session. A temporary act, regulating the middle passage, was passed.

By these discussions the cause of the abolitionists was greatly advanced. The general principles of humanity and justice on which they proceeded could not be obliterated from the public mind by reasons drawn only from political or commercial expediency, especially when these were met by most powerful state-

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Bill passes the House of Commons.

May 3.
Presented in the Lords.

Speech of the Duke of Clarence.

8th.

Debate on the mode of investigation.

June.

Bill lost.
Temporary act.

Observations.

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ments and arguments. The advocates of the abolition assumed the widest range of assertion and deduction: their opponents were clogged by facts which could not be controverted, and beset by solitary instances which were always insisted on as the characteristics of a general system, and not admitted as exceptions. By their injudicious defence of the middle passage, and by the disgraceful means used in its support, the supporters of the trade left their case exposed to censure, and their assertions to suspicion. The cause of the planters too, exclusive of general principles, was open to much animadversion, especially on the total neglect of religious instruction, which furnished strong foundation for the observation that they considered their slaves, if not absolutely as brutes, yet as creatures whose immortal concerns were beneath attention.

Police of
Middlesex.

For many years, the defective state of police in the Middlesex portion of the metropolis had been matter of astonishment and complaint. Many narratives of the apprehension, resistance, rescue, and escape of offenders, disgraced the annals of crime; the irregularities, follies, and wickedness, of some who acted as justices, or under their authority, furnished themes to the moralist, the satirist, and the dramatist; while facts, better authenticated and of more cogent interest, alarmed and agitated those who really understood and felt for the welfare of society*. In towns, the officers of the corporation,—in the country, peers and gentlemen of eminence,—exercise the duties of justices of the peace. To them the applause of their fellow citizens or the respect of their neighbours, joined to the gratifying consciousness of preventing evil or promoting good, were sufficient rewards. In Middlesex, on the contrary, the growth of the metropolis and the vast increase of its population had rendered it impossible for persons engaged in the superior stations of life to dedicate themselves to the daily duties of magistracy; and a few offices were opened, in different parts of the

* For a truly horrible instance, see Lord Orford's *Letters to Sir Horace Mann*, edited by Lord Dover, vol. i. p. 214. The event occurred, it is true, in 1742; but fifty succeeding years had produced no legislative alteration.

town, by men who, seeking, not reputation for their sagacity and wisdom, but remuneration from the fees they were permitted to receive, acquired the contemptuous appellation of trading justices. Nor were these emoluments of small amount; for, beside the ordinary business under the revenue, the criminal, and the poor laws, a long list of penal statutes brought many individuals and many cases within their jurisdiction, every one of which was attended with its direct, and, as some believed, its indirect, compensation to the justice. One conspicuous exception existed in an office established in Bow Street, Covent Garden, which, as in each week different justices presided successively, obtained the name of the Rotation Office: by the industry, sagacity, and vigour of its magistrates, government had been strengthened, and the public protected; and its arrangements probably furnished the outline of a regulation which was now to be presented to Parliament.

Mr. Burton, a barrister of eminence, and of unblemished honour, in moving for leave to bring in the bill, stated the circumstances by which it was rendered necessary.

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1792.

March 18.
Mr. Burton
moves to bring
in a bill.

He would not particularise the persons who grossly abused the office, making it a trade, but propose a remedy, by a short law, directing, first, that five offices should always be open for business; to each of which three justices should be appointed; one to be constantly on the spot, from nine in the morning until a late hour in the evening: the fees received to be accounted for into the Exchequer, to form a fund in the hands of a treasurer for payment of salaries and expenses.

On the motion for a second reading, Mr. Mainwaring objected to the bill, as a cold, feeble measure, that did not sufficiently strengthen the arm of the magistrate for the prevention of crime. As to the expenses, if it was understood that they would be defrayed out of the fees and penalties imposed by statutes, they who planned the bill were much deceived. He observed too that the appointing of magistrates by the Crown would give a prodigious patronage in the most

April 17.
Debate on the
bill.

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1792.
Mr. Sheridan.

exceptionable way. Mr. Fox urged similar topics, and Mr. Sheridan dwelt on the influence at elections which the Crown would acquire. Justices might lose their offices by voting for a member. And so, no doubt, they would, if they procured votes by remitting the penalties of the lottery act, or excused an elector, or the agent of a court candidate, from part of an excise fine, for election services.

May 18.
Further
opposition.
23rd.
Mr. Windham.

These and other objections were made and repeated during the progress of the bill ; and a clause, enabling police officers to arrest reputed thieves, who were to be punished as vagrants, Mr. Windham said, introduced a new principle, and reversed the general order of things. If they were to punish men, not for acts which they committed, but for those they intended to commit, it appeared to him as unnatural as if the hare were to chase the hounds. According to the vagrant act, persons so apprehended might be whipped and sent to prison ; they had an appeal to the quarter sessions, and might be acquitted ; but could the punishment be undone ? Could the whipping be taken off ?

Mr. Burton defended the clause, by referring to precedents from the reign of Edward the First, and by the authority of Sir Matthew Hale, who treated it as founded on a principle of common law. That such a clause was rendered necessary by the number and the boldness of thieves in the metropolis, was shewn by Mr. Burton, Mr. Dundas, and Mr. Mainwaring, who, besides the facts derived from their own inquiries and observations, reminded the House that rogues reached the gallows by degrees ; beginning, and advancing progressively, until, by an accumulation of crimes, they arrived at a climax of their destiny : to rescue them by a prudent enactment would be practical humanity. The bill passed.

Bill passed.

Observations.

This statute was calculated to be the foundation of important improvements ; but it was in many particulars defective. Parsimony and jealousy of the influence of the Crown had too much weight in composing the system. The duration of the statute was limited to three years ; the salaries of the justices to

four hundred pounds; none of them were to sit in Parliament; and they and the receiver, and all their constables, were prohibited from voting at, or interfering in, any election for Middlesex or Surrey, Westminster or Southwark. This last piece of paltry jealousy was to protect a population of about a million and a half from the dangerous influence of some three-score persons, forty-two of whom would necessarily be in a very humble station of life*. Had the views respecting the establishment been less ungenerous, the remuneration more liberal, and the duration more certain, many gentlemen of considerable standing in the law, and, which is more important, who had really been engaged in an extensive course of active business, would have embraced these offices as an honourable retirement from the bustle of courts to the useful activity of the magisterial functions. Gentlemen well educated and used to good society would have lent their aid; and from these and other equally wise and honourable classes of society might have been formed, not a detached set of police establishments, but a solid, systematic board of magistracy and police, which would have commanded the gratitude of the country, and the admiration of the civilized world.

A bill, introduced in the last session by Mr. Fox, for declaring the power of juries in matters of libel, has already been mentioned†. In several cases, Lord Mansfield, in conformity with preceding decisions, had declared that, in a criminal prosecution, when the publication and the correctness of the inuendos had been proved, it remained only for the jury to find their verdict; whether the publication were a libel or not, was a question of law, not to be decided by them, but by the court. This doctrine occasioned several debates, which have already been noticed‡; and a bill, framed

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Libel bill
brought in by
Mr. Fox.

State of the
law.

* Three justices at each office, 21; six constables—for no more were allowed,—42; and one receiver: total, 64. Of these, it was probable that the magistrates and the receiver would have freeholds in Middlesex or Surrey; but not the constables: these might, but not very probably, be householders, paying scot and lot, in Westminster or Southwark: and this was all that could be gained by this invidious exclusion. To make it still more ridiculous. Bow Street was not included; so that all the justices and officers there might appear on the hustings in Covent Garden, and all, if freemen, vote in the city of London.

† Vol. iv. p. 631.

‡ Chapter 18, vol. i. p. 474.

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by Mr. Burke, was moved by Mr. Dowdeswell, but rejected by the House. This bill, as it is shewn in several publications, resembled, in most particulars, that of Mr. Fox*; but the merit of his effort is not at all diminished: to have given vitality to that which another statesman had left inanimate, deserves all the commendation which can flow from a consideration of the measure itself, and not from a claim to originality.

Mr. Erskine too, before the dissolution of Parliament in 1784, had prepared the very bill which was afterward adopted; but, as he was not a member of the next House of Commons, the draft remained unnoticed in his hands, until it was put into those of Mr. Fox†. The state of the times rendered it fit that the leader of the opposition party should take upon himself the patronage of a measure calculated to confer popularity, without any attendant suspicion; but the path to success had been cleared and smoothed by the professional exertions of Mr. Erskine.

Mr. Erskine's
exertions at the
bar.

That truly great advocate might justly be said to possess every quality which could raise his fame, and confer on him that popularity and ascendancy in the courts which he so early acquired and so constantly retained. If a cavil were to be raised against this general proposition, it would be, that he was not profoundly read in the antiquities, nor accurately versed in the technicalities, of the law; that he was not possessed of all the old learning concerning tenures, nor all the modern decisions affecting the scope of actions or the forms of pleading. It would be too much to concede even this; for, if he was not so acquainted with these subjects as to produce his knowledge at every moment, still the acuteness of his mind enabled him instantly to become master of them, and to treat them in all their bearings and relations. With him, the law was a science and not an art; he cited cases, not as insulated or separate instances, for the purpose

* Parliamentary History, vol. xvii. p. 40; Rivington's Ann. Reg. 1792, p. 138; Almon's Anecdotes of Lord Chatham, vol. iii. p. 270; Prior's Life of Burke, vol. ii. p. 156

† Mr. Erskine told me this himself, pointing at the same time to the desk in which the draft had been so long deposited.

of carrying some particular point, or introducing some peculiar opinion ; he used them as parts of a general system ; and, when referred to by him, they were arranged, methodized, consolidated, to forward, with additional force and vigour, some great, general, comprehensive poposition. But, leaving this merely technical portion of his attainments, and adverting to his greater and more distinguishing qualities, it is impossible to speak too highly of his eloquence, in which, sublimity, feeling, and wit, were equally conspicuous ; his narrative was always luminous, well arranged, intelligible, simple ; his argument comprehensive and convincing, close without coldness, and subtle without the appearance of astuteness. Born of a noble family, and an early member of the best society, his claims to the treatment of a gentleman were conceded without resistance ; and he repaid the concession by an undeviating adherence to the duties and forms of that character : in the moments of his highest excitement, when his energy was calculated to overwhelm, and his zeal to appal those against whom it was directed, he never transgressed the bounds of politeness and decorum. It was part of his character, that, while with an indomitable spirit he maintained the rights of his client, unawed by the frowns of an adverse judge, he never had the air of a man who seeks collisions that he may acquire renown, and demands confidence, less perhaps for talent than for intrepidity.

Under his management, trials for libels had assumed a new and intense interest. His first effort, a magnanimous and successful resistance of an application for a criminal information against Captain Baillic,* had produced general admiration, and an unusual flow of business ; but in a more recent case, where he had to oppose the opinion of that learned and able magistrate, Mr. Justice Buller, at the trial, and afterward to sustain his opinions in court, his character as advocate rose to the highest pitch, and he demonstrated at once the power of his eloquence and the exactness of his judgment, in the citing and the

* Vol iii. p. 19.

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application of cases*. It is truly remarkable, and highly advantageous to the character of this illustrious advocate, to recollect how great were the effects of his displays of ability compared with any permanent result of those which had before been employed on questions much more generally interesting and popular, the general warrants, and Junius†.

Mr. Fox produces his bill.

1791.

May.

It is observed, as a fact worthy of some notice, that Mr. Fox, when he introduced the subject of libel to the House of Commons, was in the daily habit of complaining that Mr. Burke had deserted his former opinions, while he had been himself an opposer, and the gentleman whom he so accused a supporter, of Mr. Dowdeswell's motion. Mr. Fox moved to appoint an early day for a sitting of the grand committee for courts of justice. His speech was eminently able and argumentative, comprising an enlightened view of the subject generally, and an exact knowledge of legal decisions, and the facts and principles on which they were grounded. Mr. Erskine, in seconding the motion, claimed the gratitude of the public to Mr. Fox for this last instance, among so many others, of his enlightened zeal for the support of the laws and constitution upon their true principles, and of the warm interest he had constantly taken in the freedom and happiness of the people. He also disclaimed any intention of conveying censure on the conduct of the present judges; so far from it, that, guided by existing precedents, he should find it difficult, if called upon to fill a judicial situation, to bear up against the current of decisions, although they had obviously broken out of the original and prescribed channel of the law.

This great question was not treated as one of party. The Attorney-general agreed in the general argument of Mr. Erskine, and allowed that there was something in the practice of the law of libels that called for

* The case alluded to is that of Dr. Shipley, Dean of St. Asaph, begun in April 1783; tried on the merits, 6 August, 1784; and finally disposed of in Michaelmas term following, by an arrest of judgment.—See Howell's State Trials, vol. xxi. p. 847; Erskine's Speeches, vol. i. p. 137

† On Mr. Erskine's character and talents, see Butler's Reminiscences, vol. i. p. 72.

amendment and explanation. He wished it not to go into the committee; because it would seem as if, notwithstanding the intention had been so fully disclaimed, some censure was to be cast upon the judges. On the main object of Mr. Fox's argument, Mr. Pitt said he did not see any ground for differing with him. Mr. Fox complimented the minister on the fair and candid manner in which he had stated his opinion; and, in compliance with his intimation, obtained leave to bring in a bill to remove doubts respecting the rights and functions of juries in cases of libel.

On the motion for a second reading, and in the committee, Mr. Mitford and the Solicitor-general made some objections to the preamble, which were waived; but the bill was amended by introducing a clause, that the court or judge might, on every such trial, give opinions and directions to juries, in like manner as in criminal cases. The bill passed without a division.

In the House of Lords, it occasioned only one debate, on a motion by the Lord Chancellor for a postponement, that time might be afforded for consideration. Lord Camden concurred with him in this view, as it did not imply a rejection of the measure. The noble and learned Peer reiterated, in this his closing day, the opinions he had so many years before maintained, that, without the aid of any statute, the jury had a right, which they had often exercised, to judge whether a publication were criminal or not. If a jury, notwithstanding the direction of a judge, were to acquit a defendant, no power in this country could reverse their decision; so, if they found him guilty, that verdict could only lose its effect if the court were to arrest the judgment. This bill failed, as already mentioned.

In the ensuing session, it passed the Commons unnoticed. In the upper House, the Lord Chancellor said its tendency was to undermine that policy upon which the law had stood for ages, and on which had risen as great legal freedom as could be possessed by any country. He obtained a postponement of the second reading for five weeks, during which the

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25th.

31st.

Debated.

Amendment.

In the Lords.

Lord Chan-
cellor.

Bill fails.

1792.
March 20.
Reproduced.
Opposed by
the Lord Chan-
cellor.

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1792.
April 27.
May 11.
Opinions of the
Judges.

opinions of the judges were taken on seven queries. Their answers were unanimous. The most important points decided, were, that the criminality or innocence of any act charged was matter of law, not of fact. That the truth or falsehood of the matter published was immaterial, and not to be left to a jury; the word false in indictments not being applied to the propositions published, but to the aggregate criminal result; a libel was called a false libel, just as a man accused of high treason was termed a false traitor; nor was it material whether that word, in case of libel, were omitted or not. That if, upon a trial, the innocency of the matter published appeared quite evident, it was in the power of the judge to direct an acquittal; but this was a practice not to be recommended; if there were a doubt, it should be considered by the court above, or revised in error. That the criminal intention charged, in cases of libel, is generally matter of form, requiring no evidence on the part of the prosecutor, and admitting of no exculpatory proof from the defendant. The crime consists in publishing a libel; a criminal intention in the writer is no part of the definition of the crime at the common law. "He who scattereth firebrands, arrows, and "death," (which, if not an accurate definition, is a very intelligible description of a libel), is *eâ ratione* criminal; it is not incumbent on the prosecutor to prove his intent, and on his part he shall not be heard to say, "Am I not in sport?" There may be cases where a witness may be examined to prove the criminal intention; and if that were attempted, evidence to rebut the imputation would be admissible. Three other questions related to threatening letters, to papers cited as overt acts in cases of high treason, and to the manner in which a judge should give his opinion to the jury. The answers to the first two lead to no important results; to the last, the judges said they were to declare the law to juries, and not to give opinions, and it would be the duty of the jury, in finding a general verdict, to compound it of the fact in evidence and the law declared by the judge.

These opinions occasioned a strenuous debate, in which Earl Camden took a conspicuous share: in fact, his labours in public life ended with his support of this bill. He said he had thought never to trouble their lordships more. The hand of age was upon him, and he felt unable to take an active part in their deliberations; but he now considered himself particularly, or rather personally, called on. His opinion on the subject had been long known; it was upon record; it was on their lordships' table; he still retained, and he now argued it with great vigour and earnestness, supporting his reasons by reference to legal authorities and by his own practice. Lord Kenyon and the Lord Chancellor were the principal opponents; but, on a division, the commitment was carried*.

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16th.
21st.

Earl Camden.

In the committee, the Lord Chancellor made an unsuccessful motion for an amendment, and Lord Camden, with undiminished firmness, sustained his former doctrines. If the opposite opinions were to obtain, trial by jury would be a nominal trial, a mere form; for, in fact, the judge, and not the jury, would try the man. Whatever might be asserted by the twelve judges, he would contend for the truth of this argument to the latest hour of his life, *manibus pedibusque*. The Lord Chancellor proposed that the judges in their discretion might grant a new trial after an acquittal; but this was never reduced to a motion, being answered by Earl Camden with the simple phrase, "No, I thank you." The bill was read a third time, and passed without a division; but a protest was signed by the Lord Chancellor, Lords Bathurst, Kenyon, Abingdon, and Walsingham, and the Bishop of Bangor.

June 1st.
Committee.

Lord
Chancellor.

Bill passed.
Protest.

At an early period of the session, certain Unitarians had presented a petition, stating their duty to examine into and interpret the Holy Scriptures for themselves, and their right publicly to declare the result of their inquiries, complaining of grievances arising from the statutes in force†, by which religious liberty was in-

March 8th.
Petition of
Unitarians.

* 57 to 32.

† 9 and 10 W. III and 1 W. and M.

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May 11th.
Mr. Fox's
motion.

fringed, and even an imperfect toleration rendered more incomplete.*

On this subject Mr. Fox grounded a motion†, which he introduced by a well-digested speech. He treated generally on toleration, not as a thing convenient and useful to a state, but in itself essentially right and just; those who lived in a state where there was an establishment, could fairly be bound only by that part which was consistent with the pure principles of toleration; the fundamental unalienable rights of man. Why should the members of the established church proceed as if they were infallible? why claim exclusive privileges, and enforce penalties on those who differed from them? Toleration was not merely the total absence of persecution; but he would maintain that to refuse to any man any civil right, or an equal participation in civil advantages, on account of his religious opinions, was in itself persecution. It compelled men to live in a constant state of hypocrisy, to give a constant attendance on divine service, and subscribe to the ceremonies of a church in whose tenets they did not acquiesce, and even to teach their children a form of religion here, which they believed calculated to insure eternal damnation hereafter. It was said that all the commands in the church of England might safely be obeyed; that it was the safeguard of the state. Was this the fact? The church of England taught passive obedience and non-resistance; and as this doctrine was not now the law, a man, by being a good churchman, might become a bad citizen. It was said that the laws were obsolete, and the hardship ideal; if so, there could be no great harm in removing from the statute book that which we were either afraid or ashamed to enforce. He cited some instances of punishments under the penal statutes before the year 1641; and he mentioned the case of Mr. Peeble, who had suffered persecutions under Cromwell and Charles the Second; and, in proof of uncharitable opinions being still maintained, he said that Dr. South had traced the pedi-

* Journals, vol. xlvii. p. 522.

† Burke's Works, vol. x. p. 41, n.

gree of the Unitarians from wretch to wretch, back to the devil himself. Dr. Halifax had said, of Dr. Priestley, that now he had stated his opinions, he had completed his crimes; and Dr. Horsley had contended that even the moral good of the Unitarians was sin. The Birmingham riots were the effect of religious bigotry and persecution. The Catholics were not sufficiently relieved while they were still obliged to take an oath; and he declared his unvarying enmity to the marriage act, and his inclination to make a third attempt for its repeal. He wished to extirpate heresy by the old method of fire; not by burning victims, but by burning those odious, noxious acts.

Thirty-three statutes having been read, he moved that the consideration of them should be referred to a committee of the whole House.

In opposition to this motion, Mr. Burke delivered one of his most characteristic speeches. Stripping the question of its theological vestment, he purposed to discuss it as one of policy and prudence alone. As to the Rights of Man, on which some stress had been laid, he differed completely; but he would not discuss abstract rights: man he had found in society, and that was the man he looked at. No rational person ever governed himself by abstractions and universals. The statesman who did not take circumstances as well as principles into consideration, would be, not erroneous, but stark mad—metaphysically mad—*dat operam ut cum ratione insaniat*. Government, representing society, and having a general superintending control over all actions, and all publicly propagated doctrines; a reasonable, prudent, provident and moderate coercion, might be the means of preventing acts of extreme ferocity and rigour.

Mr. Burke.

An alliance between church and state he treated as an idle and fanciful speculation. An alliance is between two things that are in their nature distinct and independent, such as between two sovereign states; but, in a Christian commonwealth, the church and the state are one and the same thing, being different and integral parts of the same whole. The Christian ma-

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gistrates ought not to suffer religion to be made a pretext for destroying the peace, order, liberty, and security of society ; and, above all, religious professions ought strictly to be looked to when men begin to form new combinations, to be distinguished by new names, and, especially, when they mingled a political system with their religious opinions, true or false, plausible or implausible ; opinions soon combine with passions, actions are formed upon opinions ; and they become, in effect, bodies corporate in the state.

The petition, to which he should confine himself, had little or no relation to the other laws with which it had been most ingeniously blended. In the case of Catholic Presbyterians, Anabaptists, Independents, and Quakers, the spirit of our laws had applied penalties or granted relief, according to the supposed abuse to be repressed, or grievance to be relieved ; and the provision for a Catholic and a Quaker had been totally different, according to the exigency. Old religious factions, he said, are volcanoes burnt out ; on the lava and ashes and squalid scorix of old eruptions grow the peaceful olive, the cheering vine, and the sustaining corn : but when a new fire bursts out, a face of desolations comes on, not to be rectified in ages. Therefore, when men come before us, and rise up like an exhalation from the ground, they come in a questionable shape, and we must exorcise them, and try whether their “ intents be wicked or charitable ; ” “ whether they bring with them airs from heaven, or blasts from hell.”

He considered the authors of the petition not merely as a theological sect, but a political faction, not aiming merely at the quiet enjoyment of their own liberty, but associated for the purpose of proselytism, hoping to collect a multitude sufficient, by force and violence, to overturn the church, to rebuild on the model of the French. They triumphed in the danger of the church ; they detailed their forces, and proclaimed their means. Their declared design was to destroy the public church, and not to set up a new one of their own. He regretted sincerely the occurrences at Birmingham ; but Mr. Fox must have been imposed upon, when he thought

those riots proceeded from religious prejudices ; for Dr. Priestley had preached and written his Unitarian system for eight and twenty years without any molestation, until he and his followers came forward to celebrate the fourteenth of July, and avowed their political principles. There is, thank God, no urgent or imminent danger to the country ; the body of the people is yet sound, the constitution is in their hearts ; but when the same beginnings, which commonly ended in great calamities, present themselves, early and provident fear is the mother of safety ; because, in that state of things, the mind is firm and collected, and the judgment unembarrassed. When the fear and the evil come on together, the man is in a flutter, and his judgment is gone. These insect reptiles, whilst they go on caballing and toasting, only fill us with disgust ; if they get above their natural size, and increase the quantity, whilst they keep the quality, of their venom, they become objects of the greatest terror. “ God forbid I should ever have a despotic master ; but if I must, my choice is made ; I will have Louis the Sixteenth, rather than Monsieur Bailly, or Brissot, or Chabot ; rather George the Third, or George the Fourth, than Dr. Priestley, or Dr. Kippis. I should prefer persons who would not load a tyrannous power with the poisoned taunts of a vulgar, low-bred insolence.”

In forming a judgment on the propriety of precautions, the facts to be considered were, whether those who sway in France did not, upon system, nourish cabals in other countries, to extend their power by producing revolutions, and whether we had any cabals formed or forming within these kingdoms, to co-operate with them for the destruction of our constitution. “ It is by no means true,” he said, “ that in all contests the decision will of course be in favour of the greater number. The greater number is generally composed of men of sluggish tempers, slow to act, and unwilling to attempt ; and, by being in possession, so disposed to peace, that they are unwilling to take early and vigorous measures of defence. A smaller number, more expedite, awakened,

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“ active, vigorous, and courageous, who make amends
 “ for what they want in weight by their superabund-
 “ ance of velocity, will create an acting power of the
 “ greatest possible strength. The principle of the pe-
 “ titioners is no passive, conscientious dissent, on ac-
 “ count of an over-scrupulous habit of mind; their
 “ dissent is fundamental; goes to the very root; and
 “ is at issue, not upon this rite or that ceremony, on
 “ this or that school opinion, but on the question of an
 “ establishment, which they condemn as unchristian,
 “ unlawful, contrary to the gospel and to natural rights,
 “ as Popish and idolatrous. They wage war with the
 “ establishment itself; no quarter, no compromise.
 “ The declarations of Priestley and of Price may be
 “ termed declarations of hot men: but who are the
 “ cool men who have disclaimed them? Not one;
 “ no, not one. The danger arises from their being
 “ under the conduct of hot men; ‘ falsos in amore odia
 “ ‘ non fingere.’ They say they are well affected to
 “ the state, and mean only to destroy the church.
 “ Consider, then, whether you wish your church esta-
 “ blishment to be destroyed; if you do, let it be done
 “ now, in temper, in a grave, moderate, and parliamen-
 “ tary way. But if you think it an invaluable blessing,
 “ calculated to nourish a manly, rational, solid, and at
 “ the same time humble, piety,—well fitted to the
 “ frame and pattern of your civil constitution, a barrier
 “ against fanaticism, infidelity, and atheism; if you
 “ find that it furnishes support to the human mind in
 “ the afflictions and distresses of the world, consolation
 “ in sickness, pain, poverty, and death; if it dignifies
 “ our nature with the hope of immortality; leaves in-
 “ quiry free, whilst it preserves an authority to teach
 “ where authority only can teach, *communia altaria,*
 “ *æque ac patriam, diligite, colite, fove.*”

Other speeches

Mr. W. Smith.

After these great displays of talent, the debate acquired a frigid and uninteresting appearance. Mr. William Smith, avowing himself an Unitarian, declared that it was not on account of himself, or that body, he wished those laws repealed; they had no fears, because they knew no person in this country

who would be daring enough to put them in force: if an individual were found sufficiently infamous to rouse them into action, the public mind would repel the attempt, and produce their immediate annihilation. The repeal of the statutes would not occasion the society to publish one book more, or enable them with greater ease to disseminate their doctrines. Lord North and Mr. Adam supported, Mr. Mitford and Mr. Pitt opposed, the motion, which, after an able reply from Mr. Fox, was lost*.

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Motion
rejected.

Birmingham
riots.

Jan. 31.

May 21.
Motion by Mr.
Whitbread.

From the manner in which the unhappy transactions at Birmingham were mentioned in this discussion, it was natural to suppose that they would form the basis of some motion. In the debate on the address, Mr. Fox had animadverted on them with his usual warmth; but the matter was never brought before Parliament in a distinct and separate form, until an advanced period of the session, when Mr. Whitbread moved an address, praying for an account of information received by ministers concerning the conduct of the Warwickshire magistrates, respecting the riots at Birmingham and the trials of the rioters, and the conduct of the magistrates who had neglected their duty.

His speech was a reiteration of the facts and arguments adduced by Mr. Fox. He insisted that the riots originated, not in political, but in religious differences; that spirit of persecution which had so long prevailed against Dissenters, and which he traced back to the year 1715. The cry, during the riot, had been "Church and King!" One single person exclaimed, "No Popery!" To prove this point, and shew the prevailing animosity against Dissenters, especially Presbyterians and Unitarians, he cited the opinions of Dr. Priestley, Mr. Keir, and Dr. Parr; read a great many handbills distributed on the occasion, and a passage from Mr. Baron Perryn's charge to the grand jury. To prove the negligence of magistrates, he relied on thirty-six affidavits, which had long lain unnoticed under the eyes of the ministers and law officers of the crown. He noticed also the difficulties to which pro-

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secutors had been subjected in their attempts to bring offenders to justice; and the pardons which had been granted to two of the convicts. One had been issued without any reason assigned; and the other on evidence taken extra-judicially, and bearing too great a similarity to the famous case of M^c. Quirk.

Mr. Dundas.

In answer to this speech, Mr. Dundas cited the incendiary handbill published before the commemoration. Each party had attributed it to the other; but this was clear—that, as soon as inquiry was set on foot, and a prosecution mentioned, a dissenting minister, long resident in Birmingham, disappeared, and was heard of no more: a suspicious, if not a conclusive, circumstance. The present motion was founded—first, on the delay imputed to government in taking steps to quell the riots. He said that they commenced on Thursday afternoon; intelligence had been received only in the morning of Friday: dispatches were instantly sent to Nottingham, one hundred and thirty-three miles; the troops marched immediately, and arrived at Birmingham, a distance of fifty-six miles, about three o'clock in the afternoon on Sunday, and the riots were quelled on Monday.

As to the prosecutions, he said, twelve men had been reported, and all tried; the jury convicted only four; one was pardoned on the report of the Judge; the other had a respite of fourteen days, on the application of Sir Robert Lawley; in which period, evidence had been produced, and rigidly cross-examined by a gentleman deputed for that purpose, from which it appeared that this poor fellow, an honest, hard-working mechanic, had, by taking up some boards of a floor that confined the smoke, saved the lives of several persons in the house, and that he did it with that intent. The report of the learned gentleman had been communicated to the Judge who presided at the trial; and, on comparing it with his own notes, he declared that he saw in it nothing inconsistent with the evidence in court; and if the same facts had appeared on the trial, there would have been ground for an acquittal. But government had not the power to prevent prosecutions;

any man might institute them, either by indictment or information. The motion was rejected by more than four to one*.

In consequence of the numerous publications which appeared, in every form, from a handbill to a large volume, and under the sanction, not of individual authors alone, but of societies, associations, clubs, or by whatever name they designated themselves; in consequence of their not being confined within the accustomed limits of mere party or occasional discussion, but, by a mixture of arrogance and insidiousness, affecting to undervalue, and labouring to overthrow, all the political, legal, and religious establishments in the kingdom; in consequence of the support and favour these societies and their publications were known to have received from societies in France; his Majesty was advised to issue a proclamation on the subject. Aware that some conspicuous members of opposition contemplated the exciting crisis with the same apprehension with themselves, ministers communicated this paper, that they might be fully apprised of its contents before it was formally promulgated†.

From this circumstance arose one of those extraordinary, if not unprecedented, attempts, which shewed the pretensions already formed by the French to interfere in the political transactions of other countries. M. Chauvelin, who had recently arrived as minister plenipotentiary from France, wrote a note to Lord Grenville, observing that the proclamation might give weight to false opinions, which the enemies of his country endeavoured to circulate. If individuals had established a correspondence, and certain Frenchmen had come into their views, that was a proceeding of which government was wholly ignorant; it militated against every principle of justice, and, whenever it became known, would be universally condemned in France. He then repeated some passages in the note which announced his appointment, mentioning the

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Proclamation
respecting
seditious pub-
lications.

May 21.

21.
Interference of
M. Chauvelin.

12th.

* 189 to 46.

† Rivington's Ann. Reg. 1792; Hist. of Europe, p. 365; Tomline's Life of Pitt, vol. ii. p. 473.

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war in which France was engaged, her renunciation of all ideas of conquest, but her determination to retain her own limits, her liberty, her constitution, and her right to reform herself, and concluded by observing, that the honour of France, her desire of preserving and augmenting a good understanding between the two countries, and the necessity of clearing up every doubt as to her dispositions, requiring that they should be as publicly known as possible, he requested that Lord Grenville would communicate this official note to the two Houses of Parliament, previously to their deliberating on the proclamation.

Answer of
Lord Grenville

25th.

To the only part of this uncalled-for and most improper letter which required notice, Lord Grenville answered, that, as secretary of state to his Majesty, he could not receive any communication from a foreign minister, but in order to lay it before the King, for the purpose of learning his commands; and that the deliberations of the two Houses of Parliament, as well as the communications which his Majesty might be pleased to make to them relative to the affairs of the kingdom, were objects absolutely foreign to all diplomatic correspondence, and upon which it was impossible for him to enter into discussion with ministers of other courts.

25th.
Reply.

M. Chauvelin, in replying, repeated his assurances of good intentions, and still pressed that his note might be communicated to Parliament. The assurances of good intentions were easily made; they were mere words, to which the ministry might give credit or withhold it, according to their judgment; but it was an assertion not quite within the bounds of an ordinary confidence, that the King, the ministers, and the legislature of France were ignorant of the proceedings of clubs and societies, and not influenced or governed by them.

25th.
Proclamation
discussed in
Parliament.

Mr. Dundas having moved the order of the day, the proclamation was read. It stated that wicked and seditious writings had been printed and industriously dispersed, tending to excite tumult and disorder, by endeavouring to raise groundless jealousies and discontents respecting the laws and constitution of govern-

ment, civil and religious, established in this kingdom, and endeavouring to vilify and bring into contempt the wise and wholesome provisions made at the time of the glorious Revolution, strengthened and confirmed by subsequent laws, for the preservation and security of the rights and liberties of the subject. Writings had also been published, and industriously dispersed, recommending those seditious publications to general attention; and correspondences had been entered into with sundry persons in foreign parts, with a view to forward these criminal purposes. It then solemnly warned all people against such attempts, exhorted them to avoid and discourage all proceedings tending to produce riots, and commanded all magistrates to make diligent inquiry to discover the authors, printers, and promulgators of such writings; and commanded all sheriffs, justices of the peace, and other officers, in their respective stations, to take immediate and effectual care to suppress and prevent riots, tumults, and disorders, and to transmit to one of the Secretaries of State such information as would enable the government vigorously to carry into execution the laws against such offenders.

An address, declaring the firm determination of the House to support his Majesty in his resolution, and their full persuasion that all necessary exertions would be seconded by the zeal and gratitude of a free and loyal people, was moved by Sir Richard P'eeper Arden, Master of the Rolls, and seconded by Mr. Powys.

An amendment, considerably longer than the address, was moved by Mr. Grey. Its chief objects were to assert that, if a violation of the law had been committed, as was indicated by the proclamation, government was already invested with sufficient powers of punishment; that, if such offences existed, ministers, permitting their impunity, had been guilty of a gross neglect of duty; that the proclamation itself was calculated to excite groundless jealousies and alarms; and that proper measures had not been pursued for punishing the promoters of the riots at Birmingham.

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Address
moved by the
Master of the
Rolls.

Amendment
moved by Mr.
Grey.

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Debate.

In the debate, several prominent points of discussion arose; but they were separate and independent of each other, not growing out of any general proposition, but originating in different views of the same subject. Mr. Grey described the proclamation as one in which he could hardly distinguish whether the sentiment that gave it birth was more impotent or malicious. It was an insidious effort to separate those who had been so long connected; contrived by him whose greatest delight was to see discord supersede harmony among those who opposed him.

In point of fact, the opposition party had much reason to feel irritated at the effect produced by the proclamation, and the view generally taken of the measures by which it was occasioned: they saw, in that very debate, that they were abandoned by several of their most influential and respected adherents; Mr. Powys, Lord North, the Marquis of Titchfield, Mr. Anstruther, and Mr. Windham: and while Mr. Fox expressed his regret at this secession, he was not consoled by one proselyte to his party. In the frame of mind thus occasioned, it is not surprising that invective and abuse were lavishly bestowed on the minister. Mr. Grey, indeed, was, for his vehemence, repeatedly called to order; but the Speaker decided that he had not transgressed the bounds of debate. Mr. Pitt's whole political life, he said, was a tissue of inconsistencies, of assertion and retractation; he never proposed a measure without intending to delude his hearers; promised every thing, and performed nothing; never kept his word with the public; studied all the arts of captivating popularity, without ever intending to deserve it; was a complete public apostate, from the first step of his political life down to the present moment. If there was a man in that House whose malignity could be gratified by separating the dearest friends, to make it appear that they were inconsistent, factious, and without a general concurrence of principle, in order that they might be regarded with indifference by the country, it was Mr. Pitt, whose whole conduct was an uninterrupted series of contemptuous

disdain of the dearest rights and privileges of the people,—whose uniform practice was calculated to destroy the best privileges of that House.

It was made a principal point of attack on the motion, that the proclamation was levelled principally against the society called Friends of the People; but, considering the position in which that association stood, the defence of it was subject to considerable difficulties. Far from being an union formed by the great body of opposition, their objections against it were well known: it was convened with a certainty that a great portion of that body would never concur in its plans; and Mr. Fox himself, although more likely to favour it than some other members, was not previously consulted, nor was his name found in the list of their members: Mr. Grey alone signed the declaration of the society, and the address to the people. On the other hand, their list had to boast of at least one-fourth of the corresponding committee of the Revolution Society*. The Friends of the People, it was contended, had no object but the constitutional pursuit of a reform in the representation, and were doing no more than Mr. Pitt and the Duke of Richmond had professed ten years before; and, in proof, their speeches and letters were referred to and recited. Mr. Fox said he had not signed their declaration, nor, on the other hand, could he subscribe to the principles upon which others of his friends supported this proclamation. On both sides there was an union of disjointed associations. In 1782, there had been a meeting at the Thatched House tavern, when Mr. Pitt, the Duke of Richmond, Major Cartwright, and Mr. Horne Tooke, all agreed to certain resolutions of reform. Now, by a strange association, one set of his friends had got into company with the two first of these four, and another set with the two last. The right honourable gentleman and the Duke of Richmond had thought proper to change their opinions on the subject of reform; and against it the right honourable gentleman had brought forth a proclamation, and the noble Duke was to head

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Friends of the
People.

* Tomline's Life of Pitt, vol. ii. p. 454.

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Paine's Rights
of Man, pt. ii.

Feb.

Feb. 9.

Mr.
Courtenay.

a camp. A moderate and well-timed reform was all the people wanted; and to this they were entitled. Those who were friends to the people did not argue for any visionary or extravagant system; far less would they countenance any attempt to subvert the constitution.

Of the publications alluded to, the greatest attention was allotted to those of Paine; and it was assumed, rather too largely, that his productions alone were aimed at. This author had lately produced "The Rights of Man, part second, combining Principle and Practice;" in which all the doctrines of the first part were sustained and greatly extended, with reference to every portion of the English government, making it appear that not a reformation alone, but an extinction of all existing orders and establishments, was necessary to the welfare of the community. This work was hailed by the seditious as a record from which all their texts might be drawn. The Revolution Society, extolling it to a club with which they corresponded at Bourdeaux, observed that, in his first part, he had refuted an insolent and feeble opponent, but now he had deprived the cause of aristocracy itself of those specious arguments which his adversary had not temper to adduce*. That more general circulation might be given to this production, that the reading of it might not be confined to those who could afford the price at which it was at first announced, but that it might be obtained by every mechanic and every cottager, the author prepared an edition, of which the price was reduced from three shillings to as many pence; and received, in return, the thanks of the Society for Constitutional Information, who directed that his letter should be transmitted, together with their resolutions, to all the affiliated societies†.

Mr. Courtenay, in a speech which was censured by Mr. Drake as a piece of disgusting buffoonery, attempted to turn the proclamation into ridicule, and to

* Correspondence of the Revolution Society in London with the National Assembly and other Societies in France and England, p. 217.

† Rivington's Ann. Reg. part ii. p. 144*.

cast blame on ministers for their previous indifference to the publication now so much spoken of. More than a year ago, Mr. Paine had published his sentiments, without the least notice ; his nostrums were swallowed by the public, though not digested by ministers. The King was the head of the church, and enjoyed as much piety and as much patronage as the Pope. If the Dissenters had been a sycophantic tribe, no doubt that ministers would have expatiated most pathetically on the recent conflagrations at Birmingham. The right honourable gentleman thought it necessary to excite riots in order to preserve the peace. He might as well take cantharides to preserve his chastity.

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Mr. Francis and Mr. Fox gave some countenance to Mr. Courtenay's assertion on the subject of delay in prosecuting ; but, no member of opposition venturing to approve of the political opinions of Mr. Paine, Mr. Dundas only observed, that, upon such publications, there were differences of opinion as to the prudence of prosecuting. Mr. Paine's first pamphlet was so wild, extravagant, and visionary, as to excite astonishment at his folly in conceiving, and his boldness in publishing, such opinions. From his last publication the principles had been drawn which different societies had adopted and inculcated in various shapes. That pamphlet was published only in February, and he believed it was known that the printer and publisher was already under a prosecution. The identity of the author could not so easily be ascertained : the words "Thomas Paine" in the title page would not prove it; any person might conceal himself under its shelter.

Mr. Dundas.

The Attorney-general made similar observations ; and Mr. Pitt said, that to the opinions given by the Duke of Richmond, Major Cartwright, and a few others, in favour of universal suffrage, he had been as much opposed ten years ago as now. Since that time, however, principles had been laid down of more dangerous and indefinite extent ; principles which struck at hereditary nobility, and affected the destruction of monarchy and religion, and the total subversion of the established form of government. The number of pro-

Mr. Pitt.

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Amendment
negatived.
Mr. Fox.31st.
Debate in the
Lords.The Prince of
Wales.

selytes to a system so extravagant was too contemptible to accomplish anything at present; and it was not until societies were seen forming themselves upon those principles, that alarm was excited and preventive measures adopted.

The amendment was negatived without a division; and the question for the address afforded Mr. Fox an opportunity of disclaiming the doctrines of Mr. Paine. He did not see danger in them; for he knew that the good sense and constitutional spirit of the people was a sure protection against such absurd theories. The address was voted without a division, and sent up to the Lords.

In that assembly also an amendment was negatived, and the address voted without a division. But, if not in argument, at least in event, some novelties occurred.

His royal highness the Prince of Wales, in a manly and persuasive manner, addressed their Lordships for the first time. He said that, on a question of such magnitude, he should be deficient in his duty as a member of Parliament; unmindful of the respect he owed to the constitution, and inattentive to the welfare and the happiness of the people, if he did not state his opinion. He was educated in a reverence for the constitutional liberties of the people; and, as on those constitutional principles their happiness depended, he was determined, as far as his interest could have any force, to support them. The matter in issue was, whether the constitution was or was not to be maintained; whether the wild ideas of theory were to conquer wholesome maxims of established practice; and whether those laws, under which we had flourished for such a series of years, were to be subverted by a reform unsanctioned by the people. As an individual nearly and dearly interested in the welfare, and, he should emphatically add, the happiness and comfort of the people, it would be treason to the principles of his mind, if he did not come forward and declare his disapprobation of those seditious publications which had occasioned the motion before their Lordships. His interest

was connected with that of the people; they were so inseparable, that unless both parties concurred, happiness could not exist. On this great, on this solid basis, he grounded the vote which he meant to give, and that vote should unequivocally be, for a concurrence with the Commons in the address they had resolved upon. His Royal Highness added, in a manner that excited the attention and admiration of the House, "I exist by the love, the friendship, and the benevolence of the people; and their cause I will never forsake so long as I live*."

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The defection from the ranks of the usual opponents of government was more apparent in this than in the lower House; and Lord Lauderdale, who had moved an amendment like that of Mr. Grey, signed a solitary protest against its rejection.

Protest.

A hostile message was sent from Lord Lauderdale to the Duke of Richmond, in consequence of some strong expressions used by his Grace, in repelling animadversions on his letter to Colonel Sharman; but their seconds, Mr. Grey and Colonel Phipps, prevented consequences, by arranging well-timed and satisfactory explanations. Lord Lauderdale had afterward a meeting with General Arnold, occasioned by an unnecessary and insulting mention of his name in the debate; but it terminated without bloodshed.

Lord Lauderdale challenges the Duke of Richmond.

Duel prevented.

July.
One with General Arnold.

His Majesty closed this long, active, and interesting session with a speech, in which, after thanking Parliament for the Duke of York's establishment, he said, "I have seen with great concern the commencement of hostilities in different parts of Europe. In the present situation of affairs, it will be my principal care to maintain that harmony and good understanding which subsists between me and the several belligerent powers, and to preserve to my people the uninterrupted blessings of peace; and the assurances which I receive from all quarters of a friendly disposition toward this country, afford me the pleasing hope of succeeding in these endeavours."

Close of the Session.

* In this narrative, I have followed exactly the report; Parliamentary History, vol. xxix. p. 1516.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTY-SIXTH.

1792.

France:—State of the National Assembly.—The King.—Insolence of the mob.—Secret Cabinet—their unavailing endeavours.—State of the army—affair at Lille—at Mons.—Exertions against the King—motion in the Assembly—conduct of Petion—decree against nonjuring priests—sanction refused—constitutional guard superseded—camp around Paris decreed—the King refuses to sanction it.—State of the cabinet—Roland's letter to the King.—Ministry dismissed—new ministry—conduct of Dumouriez—vote of the Assembly—Dumouriez resigns.—Preparations for an insurrection—which takes place on the twentieth of June.—Petion's report.—Hopeless state of the King.—Lafayette's letter to the Assembly—its effect—expressions of public opinion—the King's proclamation—exertions of the Jacobins—the Marseillois.—Feeling of the army.—Lafayette's letter to the King—he goes to Paris—appears in the Assembly—his reception—his feeble conduct—and departure—effect of this visit—Useless efforts to serve the King.—Scene of reconciliation in the Assembly.—Brissot's motion—confederation—new insults on the Royal Family.—Proceedings of foreign powers—the King's advice to the emigrants.—Plan of a manifesto—the King's situation represented to the allies.—Plan of invasion.—the Duke of Brunswick—declared intention of the allies—manifesto prepared—published by the Duke—its purport—his further proclamation.—Proceedings in Paris—a national convention proposed—plot against the King—his message on the manifesto—resolutions of a section in Paris.—An insurrection prepared.—Tenth of August.—The King's authority suspended—and he and his family imprisoned—statues of

kings destroyed. — Proceedings of Lafayette — he is acquitted by the Assembly—hated by the people—his feeble conduct—accusation decreed— he arrests the commissioners of the Assembly —his flight—capture—and imprisonment— Observations. — Conduct of Dumouriez — state of the armies.—Dumouriez at Maulde — he is made commander-in-chief. — Proceedings of the allies.— The Duke of Brunswick — observations on his manifesto.—Feeble conduct of the allies—Plan of campaign. — The emigrants—treatment of them —Tardiness of the allies.—Surrender of Longwy—and Verdun.—State of Paris—decrees against emigrants—and priests—domiciliary visits—the prisons filled.—Petion appears at the bar—no longer popular—the mob insult the Assembly.—Massacres of prisoners in September—the Princess de Lamballe.—Lawless state of Paris.—Election of members to the Convention.—State of parties.—The Duke of Orléans takes the name of Egalité.—Meeting of the National Convention.—Parties.—Royalty abolished.—Struggle of parties.—New era.—Order of St. Louis abolished.—Progress of the campaign—delays of the invaders—errors of the Duke of Brunswick—the Forest of Argonne.—Activity of Dumouriez.—Battle of Valmy—critical situation of the allies—the Prussians permitted to retreat.—Observations. —The emigrants — laws against them.—Verdun and Longwy evacuated.

FRANCE exhibited, at this time, in her internal state, a rapid progress toward the excess of weakness, depravity, and guilt. Uncontrolled by the authority or influence of a second branch of legislature, and nominally, but not really, subject to the restraint of the Crown, the National Assembly affected to govern the nation; but was itself governed by the people, or, more properly, by the mob of Paris; the mob was under the direction of the clubs, and the operations of the clubs were impelled by a few factious, venal, and unprincipled demagogues, who, by cajoling them with hypocritical homage, and styling them “the sovereign people,” com-

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France.

State of the
National
Assembly.

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mitted and impelled every species of violence and injustice. The constitution, that supposed perennial edifice of human wisdom and disinterestedness, was never of the slightest use to the community; the legislature, while they invoked its name, violated its sanctions; the people were taught to abhor all its provisions which would restrain their violence, and it was obviously the aim of all the factious to change its form for one which would afford a greater portion of undefined freedom and imaginary equality. Unrestrained by notions of respect for any superior, the members of the legislature ceased to shew any toward each other; usages of polite life were discarded, while rude personalities and unqualified contradictions, atrocious charges and insulting insinuations, were unsparingly used; and loud laughing, shouting, and unmannerly noises were employed to prevent adverse members from obtaining a hearing. Over such an assembly, the President vainly endeavoured to use his legal control; the irregular members scorned his authorized signals and clamoured for their discontinuance. In the galleries, a swarm of people, introduced and not unfrequently hired for the purpose, lent the aid of their vociferation, and the force of their abuse, to the cause of disorder and violence.

The King.

The King alone made the constitution the rule of all his actions, and is even said to have learned it by heart; but, by legally refusing his assent to some decrees, he increased the fury of the populace. His Jacobin ministers were mere spies on his conduct; and the decrees they prepared were often intended only as treacherous snares, framed for his ruin if adopted, while their rejection was to be urged as a proof of his insincerity. Whenever the King or Queen appeared, they were assailed with every low, disgusting, and insolent expression which malicious ferocity, unrestrained by morals or decency, could invent*.

Insolence of
the mob.

* "I am truly miserable," said the Queen, in presence of Dumouriez; "I dare not go to a window looking toward the garden. Only yesterday evening, 'a cannoner of the national guard seized such an opportunity to overwhelm me with gross insults, adding, 'What pleasure it would give me to carry your head on the point of my bayonet.' If I look toward that frightful garden, I see, in

In this emergency, the King formed a secret cabinet, composed of the ex-ministers Mortmorin and Bertrand de Moleville, and M. Malonet; but as these individuals, although men of ability and loyalty, had no powerful or numerous adherents, no influence on the press or in the clubs, no voice in the Assembly, they might comfort the miserable sufferers, but could afford neither useful counsel nor effective aid. The civil list was wasted in absurd and useless projects; in hiring leaders of groupés, who were always overpowered; in printing and posting placards, which were speedily defaced; in bribing Danton, Fabre d'Eglantine, and other Jacobin orators, whose inefficient services were discontinued when the supplies ceased; and expensive and useless endeavours were made to secure the galleries of the Assembly. Whatever pains might be bestowed on concealment, the existence of this body and the names of its members were soon known; exaggerated and unfounded rumours were circulated, and it was displayed as an enormous and alarming conspiracy, under the pompous title of the Austrian Committee*.

The soldiers of the regiment of Chateau-vieux had been condemned for an insurrection against their officers, but discharged; they immediately associated with the clubs, and, as Mr. Burke had predicted, deliberated on the portion of obedience due to their commanders, and thus became noneffective. In consequence of repeated orders from the minister at war, the advanced guard sallied out of Lille, to attack Tournay; they were encountered by the Austrians, in force much inferior; but, at the first charge, they fell into disorder, and, exclaiming that they were betrayed, fled into the city, leaving their cannon and baggage. On their arrival, they murdered six Tyroleze rangers, their prisoners: hung their own officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Berthois, with his head downwards, and shot at him as

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Secret
cabinet;

their
unavailing
endeavours.

State of the
army.

April 15.

April 28.

Affair at
Lille.

* "one place, a man, mounted on a chair, reading horrible calumnies against us; in another, an officer or an abbé dragged with insults and blows, and plunged into the bason."—*Life of Dumouriez*, vol. ii. p. 207.—*Lacretelle*, t. ix. p. 99.

* *Bertrand's Memoirs*, *passim*.—*Conjuration du Due d'Orléans*, t. iii. p. 159.—*Lacretelle*, t. ix. p. 101.—*Thiers*, t. ii. p. 92.

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29—30.
At Mons.

Exertions
against the
King.

May 23.
Motion in
the Assembly.

Conduct of
Petion.

22nd.

23rd.

a mark; and when their leader, General Dillon, was brought in wounded, murdered him, exercising on his body acts of savage ferocity*. A similar scene in the field, although not attended with the same barbarous results, occurred at Mons, where General Biron was repulsed by Beaulieu, the Austrian commander: his troops fled with equal precipitation, leaving their camp equipage, baggage, and military chest, and they were only rescued from total destruction by the advance of General Rochambeau, who brought his whole force to their succour†.

These events, and some other reverses which attended the armies, were made use of, as Brissot had predicted and planned, to impart a general belief that treachery prevailed in the service, and that discipline among the troops and success against the enemy were never to be expected while the direction of the war was confided to the King, and he must be driven to abdicate, or forcibly deposed. In the Assembly, Gensonné denounced the Austrian Committee, and Brissot undertook to prove its existence and its malign influence, beginning as far back as the year 1756. His proofs, it is true, amounted to nothing; but his speech, with the document annexed, and that of Gensonné, were ordered to be printed, which answered all their purposes‡. At the same time Petion, pretending apprehensions of the King's escape, wrote of his own authority to the commandant of the national guard, requiring an increase in the number and strength of the patrols. In a letter to the municipality, the King justly complained of this proceeding as unconstitutional, and of the supposed

* For some horrible particulars, see Rivington's Annual Register, 1792, part i, p. 404.

† Histories, particularly Lacretelle, t. ix. p. 107; Life of Dumouriez, vol. ii. p. 286 and 299; Bertrand's Annals, vol. vi. p. 134.

‡ Brissot excuses his want of exact proofs by saying, "Conspiracies of this kind are not reduced to writing, and although their existence may be indisputable, it is sometimes difficult to discover them by distinct traces. For example, every body knows that, behind the curtain, Lord Biout governed the Cabinet of St. James's; but where is the Englishman who would not laugh at you if you asked for legal proofs? Was it not the same in the coalition between the ministry and Lord Filfox?" *Moniteur du 21 Mai, 1792*, p. 601. — This fiend-like argument must have been bitterly recollected by him, a twelvemonth afterward, when it was used by his enemies to hunt him and his associates to the scaffold.

report as a malignant calumny. The municipality ordered both the letters to be printed, and Petion published with them a reply, asserting that he was justified in sending a prudent letter, conceived in the most measured terms. "The King," he said, "considers the report of his intended flight as a horrible calumny. Well! who has accredited the calumny? those who have given publicity to a confidential communication*."

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On the night chosen by Petion for writing his insidious and inflammatory letter, the Assembly decreed that, on complaint to the local authorities, by twenty petitioners, denouncing any non-juring priests, as disturbers of the public peace, they should be transported. To this iniquitous law, the King, as was expected, refused his sanction, and the people were instigated to present petitions, complaining of the absurdity that one man should be permitted to paralyse the will of twenty-six millions.

Decree against
non-juring
priests.

24th.

Sanction
refused.

A constitutional guard of twelve hundred foot and six hundred horse, which had been appointed to protect the Royal Family, were superseded in most of their functions by the national guard, whose hostility to the King and Queen was well known. The pretence was, that the constitutional guard were refractory priests and returned emigrants; that they held counter-revolutionary feasts, and had a white flag, given by the Queen, concealed in their barracks. This denunciation, urged without proof, by some of the lowest members of the Assembly*, procured a decree for disbanding this corps, and sending their commander, the Duke de Brissac, without a hearing, to be tried by the High Court at Orléans†. On the representation of Servan, the minister of war, the Assembly decreed the formation of a camp of twenty thousand men around Paris, to be selected from all the departments; the pretext was security against the foreign enemy, the obvious intention to overawe and constrain the King.

Constitutional
guard

suspended.

28th.

30th.

Camp around
Paris decreed.

June 6th.

* *Moniteur* du 25 Mai, 1792, p. 606; et du 26 Mai, p. 610.

† *Merlin, Chabot, and Bazire.*

‡ *Lacretelle*, tome ix. p. 102.

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Sanction
refused.State of the
cabinet.

This decree was not generally approved: the national guard and the citizens of Paris expressed dissatisfaction or apprehension; eight thousand persons signed a petition against it, and the King refused his sanction, not without the secret approbation of Robespierre, Danton, and the violent republicans, who dreaded an armed force, which would throw so much power into the hands of Brissot and his party*.

The cabinet was divided into two parties: the one, composed of Dumouriez, Lacoste, and Duranthon, desirous of maintaining the constitutional monarchy; the others, Roland, Servan, and Clavière, were avowed republicans, striving, by all means, to make the King abdicate; they were less inclined to cause his deposition, because such a measure would increase the ascendancy of the violent party. The discord of the ministers occasioned a cessation of the customary social intercourse, and, in a newspaper printed at the abode, and under the inspection of Roland and his wife, the transactions in the cabinet were disclosed, with observations injurious to the adverse ministers†.

Roland's
Letter to the
King.

11th.

On the King's refusal to sanction the decrees, Guadet proposed sending him a letter; but it was so indecently disrespectful, that Dumouriez and Lacoste refused their signatures, and it was withdrawn; but Roland subscribed one composed by his wife, and transmitted it to the King. She describes it as a specimen of the manner in which she united strength with mildness, the authority of reason with the charm of sentiment. A more recent writer‡ justly characterizes it as a composition in which the writer gave herself up, without scruple or restraint, to republican pedantry and revolutionary harshness; the style common, though gloomy, and the writer intoxicated with the unworthy pleasure of insulting a sovereign in his misery. At the next council, Roland gave himself the pleasure of reading his wife's audacious missive: Louis observed that, as he had already perused it, this act

* Lacroix, tom. ix. p. 114.

† Life of Dumouriez, vol. ii. p. 338—348.

‡ Lacroix.

was, at least, unnecessary, and informed Roland that he was no longer a minister; Servan and Clavière were dismissed at the same time*.

To Dumouriez was committed the difficult, not to say impracticable, task of forming an administration. He retained the office he already held, that of foreign affairs, until his intended successor should arrive, and took that of minister of war, in which he hoped to signalize himself. It is said that he persuaded the King to dismiss his former ministers, because they insisted on a sanction to the obnoxious decrees†; but he asserts, with little probability, that he accepted office only on condition that the King should comply.

Roland forwarded his wife's letter to the Assembly; it was read amidst shouts of applause; and, imitating their predecessors on the retreat of Necker, they declared that the late ministers carried with them the regrets of the nation. In execution of his duty, Dumouriez attended at the bar: his courage and presence of mind protected him from personal insult; but although he endeavoured to give the transaction dignity as a scene, he had full reason to be convinced that, under present circumstances, he could not govern the country. He threatened to resign, unless the King would sanction the decrees, and the unhappy monarch refusing to depart from his determination so often expressed, Dumouriez retired from office in four days. He announced his resignation to the Assembly by a verbose epistle, in which he requested permission to join the army, and wished that a cannon ball might soon reconcile all opinions concerning him. Without an observation, it was decreed that he might repair to his post in the army of the North.

At this time, Dumouriez well knew that a fearful crisis was approaching. On the anniversary of the

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Ministry
dismissed.

New
ministry.

Conduct of
Dumouriez.

14th.

Vote of the
Assembly.

19th.

Dumouriez
resigns.

* The narrative of these transactions is derived from the histories in general. Lacretelle, tome ix. p. 122, states the facts and gives a copious extract from the letter. It is printed at length by Thiers, tome ii. p. 100; in les Œuvres de Madame Roland, tome ii. p. 107; le Moniteur, du 15 Juin, p. 692, and various Collections. Dumont makes judicious and striking observations on the publication of this letter. Souvenirs sur Mirabeau, p. 278.

† Bertrand's Annals, vol. ii. p. 266 to 287.

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19th.

decree by which titles of distinction were abolished, Condorcet, after a pedantic and abusive declamation, obtained a decree, that all the departments should be authorized to destroy the records of titles, wherever deposited. The orator of a deputation from Marseilles said, "The day of the people's anger is at last come. "It is time that they should rise: that generous, but "too much irritated, lion, will rouse from his rest, to "dart upon the pack of conspirators." This address was ordered to be printed and sent to the departments. A member, declaring that the morrow was fixed on as a day of storm, moved that the legislature should hear a letter, written by the minister of the interior, that they might take necessary measures. Vergniaud, supported by the galleries and a large party of the legislature, treated with derision a proposal that the National Assembly should devise measures of police, and they passed to the order of the day.

It was obvious that the Gironde was preparing an insurrection for the purpose of avenging and reinstating their friends in office; Robespierre, Danton, and that faction, regretted, but durst not oppose, the proceeding, although it might confer too much power on the party they hated. An insurrection paid, but not headed, by the Duke of Orléans, was openly preparing. The walls were covered with incendiary placards, a dinner was given in the Champs Elysées, when it was avowed that, on the morrow, the tree of liberty must be planted in the garden of the Tuileries, but it should be an aspen (*tremble*), not an oak*; and the sittings of the Jacobin club were declared permanent.

20th.
It breaks
forth.

On the day appointed, a swarm from the suburbs of St. Antoine and St. Marceau made its appearance in the Assembly. Rœderer, the procureur-general-syn-dic, stated that a collection of a hundred thousand men in arms was formed on the place where the Bastile stood; who intended to present a petition, and

* The reader may recollect that the idea of a "tree of liberty" had been promulgated in America in 1774. See vol. ii. p. 103.

afterwards go in a body to the Tuileries; he requested the legislature to enforce the law, and refuse admission to armed petitioners. While this application was under discussion, the mob presented themselves, declaring that their number did not exceed eight thousand, and promising merely to leave their petition, and not proceed to the palace. When admitted, they were found to consist of men who gloried in, and literally deserved, the new-fashioned revolutionary title of Sansculottes; armed with pikes, twybills, knives, and bludgeons, and carrying ensigns with inscriptions in which sanguinary ferocity was mingled with coarse ribaldry. Some were inscribed with threats against the King, demands for the recall of the ministers, and the sanction of the decrees; and words, emblems, and devices threatened the murder of Louis, his family, and all who adhered to him. This dreadful assemblage, accompanied with a band of music, consumed two hours in passing through the hall, interrupting their own march by dancing, songs, and speeches, to the dismay of the overawed legislators, but to the great delight of the galleries. Their orators said that blood must flow, or the tree of liberty, which they were about to plant, must flourish in peace. That the executive power was not in concord with the legislative power, was proved by the dismissal of the patriot ministers; the happiness of a nation was not to be dependent on the caprice of a king, nor should he have any will but that of the law. When the procession was ended, the senate closed its morning sitting at four o'clock.

The insurgents, divided into three columns, led by Santerre, St. Huruge, and Theroigne de Mericourt, proceeded to the palace. Petion had purposely absented himself, so that no orders could be obtained from the civic authorities; and the national guard, disorganized by decrees of the Assembly, were tranquil and inactive spectators of the scene. The King was in a chamber called the *Œil de Bœuf*, the door of which was immediately assailed with various engines; and, among others, with a dismounted cannon, which was carried up stairs by manual strength, and used as a

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battering ram. The Swiss guards were preparing to shed their blood in an unavailing defence; but the King commanding them to desist, the door was unbarred, and his friends, fearing he would be borne down by the violence and rapidity of the rabble, placed him in the recess of a window. His murder, had that been in the contemplation of the conspirators, might easily have been accomplished; but that, for the time, was spared; the fury of the mob was vented in words, menacing gestures, and the insults of Legendre, the butcher, and others quite worthy to be his associates. A bottle was tendered to him to drink the health of the nation; and the red woollen cap, the emblem of Jacobinism, was placed on his head. Great part of the popular rage was, as usual, directed against the Queen, who, endeavouring to join her husband in the *œil de bœuf*, was stopped in the council room and placed behind the feeble rampart of a table, where she remained agonized by a knowledge of the King's danger, and a helpless hearer of the incendiary and obscene reproaches which men and women of the lowest class seemed unwearied in repeating. The Princess Elizabeth had followed the King; and the mob, thinking she was the Queen, loaded her with insults and threats. Some of her attendants attempting to explain the mistake, "For God's sake," she said, "do not undeceive them; is it not better they should shed my blood than that of my sister."

The National Assembly resumed their sitting in the afternoon; they treated with rudeness, and frequently interrupted, those members who described in due terms of indignation the atrocities which were committed in the palace; but, at length, they deputed twenty-four members to express their solicitude for the King's safety. This deputation offered to protect him and share his dangers; but it was not until the mob, grown languid by the repetition of insult, no longer showed a formidable aspect. At six o'clock in the evening, Petion arrived, and assured the King that he had nothing to fear. "Fear, sir," the King replied, with indignation; "the man whose conscience is pure and

free from reproach, can never fear; feel my heart; does it beat like that of a man in fear?" The mob had frequently pressed him, with furious acclamation, to sanction the decrees, and recall the ministers; but he replied, "I shall do what I consider to be right; this is not the moment for you to ask, or for me to grant, favours." Convinced that the insurrection would not produce the expected advantages, Petion said, "Citizens, you have now made your desires known to the hereditary representative, with the energy and dignity becoming a free people, who understand their rights. The King at present knows, and will undoubtedly pay proper regard to, the intentions of the sovereign;" and he required them to retire with calmness and decency, that their intentions might not be calumniated. The obedient rabble immediately filed off, and at nine the palace was cleared.

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Petion stated the events to the Assembly in a speech made up of gross falsehoods and fallacious equivocations. Every thing, he said, indicated the greatest calm. Persons, property, all were respected. The people were passing through the Tuileries, when several citizens proceeded to the King's apartments; they insulted nobody; nor had the King any reason to complain*.

Petion's
report.

From this period, no hope of maintaining the throne could be entertained. If a struggle were made, the King would neither sanction force nor attempt escape, and his friends only exposed their lives in an unavailing conflict. During the horrible day which has been described, his conduct has justly been termed heroic; but his was the heroism of suffering, not of acting,—the heroism, not of a monarch, but a martyr.

Hopeless state
of the King.

Disgusted with the Jacobin administration, sensible of his own unpleasant position, in being employed but not trusted, heading an army, while all his movements were commanded or controlled, and desirous of pre-

Lafayette.

* Histories. Debates in the *Moniteur*. *Revue Chronologique*. Bertrand's *Annals*, vol. vi. p. 316, et seqq. Particular references are not multiplied, because there is no essential difference in the narratives. I have, also, generally omitted the work of Mr. Alison; for, as I have always referred to him, the repetition would be too frequent.

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16th.
His letter to
the Assembly.

serving the faint semblance of royal authority, which he had suffered to remain, Lafayette addressed, from the camp at Maubeuge, a letter to the Assembly, feeble in its composition, disclosing truths to which attention could not be expected, and replete with boastings of acts and virtues of his own, which had long been regarded with indifference, and the mention of them with derision. He denounced the Jacobin club, and a ministry, its worthy produce, and required the legislature to annihilate the authority of clubs, give force to the reign of the law, to the firm independence of the constituted authorities, and to the real interests of the nation.

18th.
Its effects.

This frothy epistle arrived at an unfortunate moment: just at the time when the Assembly voted that the rejected ministers carried with them the regrets of the nation; just at the time when the dreadful scenes last described were in full preparation. The reading caused a boisterous debate: at first, it was considerably applauded, and a motion made that it should be printed and sent to the departments; but the Brissotines decried it as unconstitutional; a letter to the legislature, from a general at the head of an army, was a law; if not, what was it? A doubt was expressed of its being genuine, Vergniaud talked about Cromwell; but finally it was referred to a committee of twelve, for the purpose of a report.*

Expressions of
public opinion.

In the departments, the shameful treatment of the Royal Family created a considerable feeling, and addresses were presented on the subject. The better class of people in the metropolis began also to express strong opinions; proceedings were threatened against Petion and the members of the municipality; the national guards participated in these sentiments; the legislature passed a decree, again forbidding the presenting of petitions by armed bodies; and the King, in a judicious proclamation, denounced the conduct and views of the factions; declared that he would not be forced by them to adopt measures which he deemed repugnant to the public interest; if they who wished

The King's
proclamation.* See the letter, *Moniteur*, June, 1792, p. 713.

to overthrow monarchy had need of one crime more, they might commit it.

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The Jacobins retorted by furious speeches and violent denunciations against Lafayette, the Royal Family, Dumouriez, and many others. In the Assembly, they cast the whole blame of the insurrection on the King, their innumerable placards gave confidence to their adherents, and their audacity was increased by the daily arrival of revolutionary parties from the provinces. A band of men, called Marseillois, came at their call, prepared to overawe, terrify, plunder, or murder, as they might be directed. Their number at first was insignificant, and it was increased only to seven hundred. They are described by an intelligent French author* as the men who, for many months, had kept the south of France in terror. Several had borne a horrible part in the massacres of Avignon; many came out of the gaols of Genoa, Savoy, Piedmont, and Corsica. They were of small stature, tanned complexions, endowed with great agility; while their dialect, their songs, their exercises, their gestures, and their dances, always exhibited, even in their gaiety, an expression of barbarism and cruelty. They possessed an enterprising courage, unknown to the revolutionists of Paris, who durst not undertake any thing unless protected by a long avenue of pikes. The progress of the Marseillois to Paris was marked by acts characteristic of their principles; robbery, rape, and murder, attended their footsteps; they recruited their bands with all the abandoned wretches whom want or infamy had rendered desperate. In their progress from the barrière du Trône, where they entered, to the mayor's house, they insulted and defied the inhabitants; they insisted that for silken cockades, worsted should be substituted, and enforced their decree with violence. The national guards were thirty-two thousand; but they and the citizens remonstrated in vain; they were terror-struck by this handful of resolute banditti, and forced to submit*.

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Exertions of
the Jacobins.

The
Marseillois.

* Lacretelle, Histoire de France, tome ix. p. 178.

† La Vallée, tome i. p. 262, 272.

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Feeling of the
army.
Lafayette's
letter to the
King.He goes to
Paris.

28th.

He appears in
the Assembly.

It was known that the armies had expressed great indignation at the treatment of the King. Lafayette forwarded a letter to him, applauding his firmness, and promising a devoted regard to his interests and safety, and his firm adherence to his oath, which bound him to the nation, the law, and the King*; but the recollection of all his proceedings, and particularly his behaviour after the return from Varennes, prevented Louis from placing confidence in his professions; and the Queen could not conquer the just abhorrence which his repeated acts of perfidy and insolence occasioned. It was soon rumoured that he was coming to Paris; and, as it was supposed that he would be attended by a considerable body of troops, no small alarm was felt by the Republicans. He did arrive, but with an overweening confidence which could proceed only from exaggerated vanity; he was accompanied only with a small portion of his staff, and presented himself alone at the bar of the Assembly. In an energetic speech, he avowed his letter, stated the feelings of the army, and demanded justice on those who had instigated the late commotion, and the suppression of the Jacobins. It could not yet be believed that he had not a body of troops at hand. A portion of the members and the tribunes applauded: the enemies of the King felt great consternation. Guadet relieved their alarms by an indirect and cautious attack. "When I learnt," he said, "that General Lafayette was in Paris, I was overjoyed. Well, said I, we have no more foreign enemies; the Austrians are defeated: but such is not the fact; our external situation is unchanged; and yet M. Lafayette is in Paris. What has brought him? Our interior troubles. He fears then that the National Assembly has not power to repress them." In conclusion, he moved for an inquiry, whether the minister at war had given permission to the General to leave his army. Mr. Ramond undertook the defence of Lafayette, whom he styled the eldest son of liberty, and moved that his petition should be referred to the committee of twelve. A stormy debate ensued, in which the not unusual

* Moniteur, 1st July 1792, p. 761.

words, "it is false," and "scoundrel," were heard ; but, at last, the constitutional party gained the ascendancy, on a division, by a majority of more than a hundred*.

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His feeble conduct.

Had Lafayette possessed the qualities of a great man, he might now have guided the fate of his country, stopped the progress of crime, and given as much establishment as it was capable of receiving to the monarchy. He sat in silence during the debate: at the rising of the Assembly, he was surrounded by a numerous body, who appeared warm in his cause; the inviolability of the Jacobins was no longer believed in; an attack on them was expected; and the people encouraged the hope by shouts of "Lafayette for ever! down with the Jacobins!" He might have rallied around him the national and the Swiss guards, three or four hundred of whom already appeared in his train; but when some of his officers offered to march against the Jacobins, and the proposition was not adopted, his followers rapidly diminished, and he retired to his hotel, on the approach of night, with few, except his military attendants. He hoped, on the next day, to make a happier effort, by addressing the national guards at a general review; but Petion contrived to prevent that ceremony. The grenadiers were convened; but, at several meetings, their numbers were so insignificant that they retired in confusion. After an ineffective and inglorious sojourn of two days, Lafayette left Paris and returned to his army, leaving a letter to the Assembly, which was referred to the committee of twelve†. In the debate, he was treated with great severity; the Assembly was reproached for having allowed the honours of the sitting to a deserter. If he pretended to be a Cæsar, it was hoped that in every soldier he would find a Brutus. The Jacobins resumed courage, and the people burned him in effigy in the garden of the Palais Royal.

He departs.
30th.

Effect of his
appearance.

The opportunity of rendering effectual service to the King and country, thus weakly thrown away, could never be regained. Projects were formed and

Useless efforts
to serve the
King.

* 339 to 234.

† *Moniteur*, 1st July, 1792, p. 764.

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July 7.
Scene of re-
conciliation.

presented for his escape by Lafayette and many others ; but, beside the insuperable objections entertained against the General, the indecisive character of the King, heightened by a gloomy foreboding which hung over and depressed his spirits*, prevented them from being essayed.

Brissot had given notice of a motion to declare that the King had forfeited the crown ; and great expectations were entertained of a speech which he was to deliver ; but an enthusiastic or insane female, named Olympia de Gouges, published a bombastic invitation to all parties to become reconciled, and forget their personal quarrels, for the sake of the country. Lamourette, constitutional bishop of Lyons, made a speech, full of the same sentiments : the opposing members rushed into each other's arms, professed to bury all their differences in oblivion, and swore, in their usual fashion, that they would never suffer, either by the introduction of a republic, the establishment of two chambers, or any alteration in the constitution. The King was called in to view this solemn burlesque, the effect of which hardly lasted a day : the Jacobins treated it with ridicule ; Brissot reproduced his speech in two days ; it was full of vehement abuse, received with great applause, and ordered to be printed.

Brissot's
motion.
9th.

Although every effort was used to incense the public mind against the Royal Family, by publications, speeches, and petitions,—and although large bodies of squalid ruffians, under the name of *Fédérés*, daily arriving in Paris, gave considerable alarm,—yet the confederation, the third commemoration of the taking of the Bastille, passed over without actual violence. The King, resembling rather a captive in the hands of a barbarous enemy, than the sovereign of a civilized nation enjoying a festival in his own capital, amidst his own subjects, was the object of derision and insult. Petion, having been declared innocent of the late insurrection†, and his suspension removed, was the idol of the day : his name was chalked on the hats of the

14th.
Confederation.* Bertrand's *Private Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 409.† *Moniteur*, *passim* ; particularly the 16th and 17th of July, 1792.

mob, and inscribed on banners with those of Aristides and William Tell; and the cry was, "Petion for ever! "Petion or death!" He enjoyed the scene with the expanded countenance of foolish delight, unconscious that the whole display was an illusion, that his supposed popularity was merely a political contrivance, and that the Jacobins had already devoted him to destruction.

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Austria and Prussia, having collected powerful and well-disciplined armies, were on the point of invading the French territory: Sardinia had also declared war; but no force from that country was employed. At Berlin, M. Mallet du Pan, an accredited agent from Louis, with Counts Cobentzl and Haugwitz, and Major-General Heymann, held a conference. M. Mallet, by instructions from the King, besought and exhorted the emigrant Princes to abstain from taking any offensive part in the war, which, thus ceasing to be perfectly foreign, would kindle civil hostilities, endanger the lives of himself and family, overthrow the throne, and give firmness and consistency to the influence of the Jacobins. To the courts of Vienna and Berlin, a manifesto was recommended, in which the Jacobins should be separated from the rest of the nation; the war only against them, and not the French people: but it was to be energetically declared, that the Assembly, the administrative bodies, municipalities, and ministers, would be held individually responsible, in their persons and property, for all violences committed against any of the Royal Family, or any citizens whomsoever; that the sovereigns sincerely desired peace, but would treat only with the King; and that, although forced, by unjust aggression, to take up arms, they attributed the declaration of war against them neither to the King nor to the nation, but only to the faction which oppressed both. This plan of a manifesto was entirely approved, and declared to be in conformity with the sentiments of the King of Prussia. Having added an afflicting picture of the King's situation, and a just display of the state of parties, M. Mallet du Pan, considering his negotiation terminated, returned to Geneva.

Proceedings of
foreign powers

July 15.

The King's
advice to the
emigrants.

Plan of a ma-
nifesto.

Representa-
tion of the si-
tuation of the
King.

20th.

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April 24.
Plan of
invasion.
Duke of
Brunswick.Declared
intentions of
the allies.Manifesto
prepared.Published by
the Duke of
Brunswick.July 25.
its purport.

At an early period of the year, the invasion of France had been determined. Prussia was to supply fifty thousand men, while twenty-five thousand were engaged in Poland. The command of the united force was to be confided to the Duke of Brunswick, who was deemed an accomplished prince, a sagacious politician, and the best general in Europe*.

In this invasion, the allied powers disclaimed all selfish views. They would not subject to their own dominion any place that might yield to their arms; but would only assist loyal and well-disposed subjects in giving personal freedom to their sovereign, and restoring his constitutional authority.

For the outline of a public proclamation or manifesto, the allied sovereigns appeared to approve of that suggested by Mallet du Pan; but as an allusion to the rights of the German princes was considered necessary, some difference of opinion existed between Prussia and Austria. On the recommendation of M. de Calonne, the task was committed to the Marquis de Simon, who prepared a draft far more violent than the previous deliberations of the sovereigns or the instructions of the French King warranted, but which, when produced to them severally, they both approved. The Duke of Brunswick objected to its violence, and, in a conference with some leading and confidential advisers of the two monarchs, induced them to adopt his views, and, by obliterations and additions, considerably to change its tenour; but M. de Simon would not recede from his opinions: the two monarchs subscribed the document, and although he still strongly expressed his objections, the Duke finally acceded, and it was promulgated under his name.

In this manifesto, views of conquest, and an intention to intermeddle in the internal government of France, were distinctly disclaimed, and a spirit of moderation displayed; but, on the other hand, it exhibited vengeful violence and sanguinary persecution. A most unjust and injudicious distinction was made be-

* For details on his character and manners, see Mirabeau, *Histoire Secrète de la Cour de Berlin*, tome i. Lettres 3 et 4; also *Mémoires d'un Homme d'État*, tome i. p. 344.

tween the soldiers of the line and the national guards; the former were called on to return to their allegiance; but the others, if they fought against the troops of the allied courts, and were taken with arms in their hands, were to be punished as rebels. It declared that the members of departments, districts, and municipalities should be responsible, on pain of losing their heads and their estates, for all crimes, conflagrations, murders and pillage, which they should not, in a public manner, have attempted to prevent. The inhabitants of towns, bourgs, and villages, who should dare to defend themselves against the allied forces, or fire upon them in the field or from houses, should be punished with all the rigours of war, or their dwellings demolished or burnt. The eighth article was in these words:—"The City of Paris, and all its inhabitants, without distinction, shall be called upon to submit instantly and without delay to the King, to set him at full liberty, and to ensure to him and to all royal persons, the inviolability and respect due, by the laws of nature and of nations, to sovereigns: their Imperial and Royal Majesties making personally responsible for all events, on pain of losing their heads, pursuant to military trials, without hopes of pardon, all the members of the National Assembly, of the departments, of the districts, of the municipality, and of the national guards of Paris, justices of peace, and others whom it may concern; and their Imperial and Royal Majesties further declare, on their faith and word of Emperor and King, that if the palace of the Tuileries be forced or insulted—if the least violence be offered, the least outrage done to their Majesties, the King, the Queen, and the Royal Family;—if they be not immediately placed in safety, and set at liberty, they will inflict on those who shall deserve it, the most exemplary and ever-memorable avenging punishments, by giving up the city of Paris to military execution, and exposing it to total destruction; and the rebels who shall be guilty of illegal resistance shall suffer the punishments which they shall have deserved."

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27th.
His further
proclamation.

Two days afterward, the Duke put forth an additional declaration, in which he added, that if the King, the Queen, or any other person of the Royal Family, should be carried off from Paris, all the places and towns, which should not have opposed their passage, and stopped their progress, should incur the penalties inflicted on the inhabitants of the city of Paris; and the route to be taken by those who should carry off the King and the Royal Family should be marked with a series of exemplary punishments, justly due to the authors and abettors of crimes for which there is no remission.

Effect of these
publications.

These compositions produced, as might be expected, effects most adverse to the royal cause. Those who were objects of the threats viewed them with indignation, but without fear; they who were favourable to the King anxiously disavowed the sentiments and intentions which were disclosed; and foreign nations viewed with horror the unfolding of a system which, if applied more generally, would destroy all the rules by which national hostility was mitigated, and bring back the reign of barbarism*.

These ill-judged papers formed a constant topic of reference, whenever the views of the factions were questioned; they served also to inflame popular fury, by assigning to it the name of patriotic courage, to exasperate the feelings of a brave and irritable people, and to stigmatize any disposition toward relenting as cowardice at least, if not treason, against the nation.

Proceedings
in Paris.

Since the 20th of June, a conflict had been maintained between the commune of Paris and the partizans of Petion, on the events of that day; it had terminated, as has been mentioned, in the acquittal of the Mayor, and also of Manuel, although petitions against them had been forwarded from several of the departments, and one had been signed in Paris, with names, amounting, according to a report, probably exaggerated, to twenty thousand. The Girondist

* For these facts, all the histories and collections of State Papers have been consulted, and particularly *Mémoires d'un Homme d'État*, tome i. p. 341, et seqq.

party, hating royalty, yet fearing the excesses to which the furious Jacobins would resort, and the ascendancy they would acquire, were anxious to avoid an insurrection, and made proposals to the court, founded on the recall of the three ministers; but, as this attempt did not succeed, they urged a decree of abdication. The party of Robespierre, considering this measure short of their aims, maintained the necessity of an appeal to the people in primary assemblies, and the formation of a National Convention, in which measures had already been taken to secure to Robespierre a tyrannical ascendancy. Terrified at these indications, Brissot pressed the question of abdication with unexpected moderation: it required, he said, to be considered calmly and maturely: while others, who afterward appeared to be of his party, such as Barbaroux, Chenier, and Carra, made strenuous efforts for a Convention; and Chabot and other violent Jacobins in the Assembly, day after day, clamoured for a decree of abdication. These efforts were supported by proceedings of the most violent description in the city; volunteers departing to join the army came first to the bar, to require a decree that no order emanating from the King should have effect until it had been communicated to the Assembly; a proposition which was received with vehement applause, and they who presented it were invited to the honours of the sitting. Guadet, supported by Brissot, moved an address to the King, couched in terms of violence and reproach; but its only object was the reinstatement of their confederate ministers.

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A National
Convention
proposed.

23rd.

26th.

It has been rashly, if not wickedly, asserted, that this violence arose from the manifesto of the Duke of Brunswick; but the transaction last mentioned occurred before it existed; and before it was known in Paris, measures had been arranged for an insurrection, accompanied with the forcible dethronement, if not the murder of the King. When the manifesto was communicated to him, Louis sent a message to the legislature, stating his disbelief of its authenticity, and his love of peace; but, if that could not be obtained, his constant

Plot against
the King.

August 3rd.
His message
on the mani-
festo.

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Resolutions
and address of
the section of
Mauconseil.

and anxious desire that the war should be prosecuted with vigour, to which effect all his orders and endeavours had tended; but he lamented to say, they were impeded by intestine divisions. The reading was interrupted by murmurs among the members and by stronger demonstrations of disgust in the galleries. The printing and publication were refused, after speeches of bitter malevolence, in which it was suggested, that if the Assembly were on that day to tell the nation they might depend upon the King, they might soon be driven to a woeful recantation*.

Before this scene had taken place, the section of Mauconseil, one of the divisions of Paris, passed resolutions affirming that liberty could not be saved by means of the constitution; and as Louis the Sixteenth had forfeited the confidence of the nation, they declared in the most solemn and authentic manner that they would no longer acknowledge him as King of the French; and that while they renewed the oath, so dear to their hearts, to live and die free, they retracted all other oaths which had been taken through a surprise on the public faith. On the next Sunday (the fifth) they would repair in a body to the Assembly, to ask if they would save the country, reserving to themselves to make further resolutions, according to the answer of that body, but promising, before hand, rather to bury themselves under the ruins of liberty, than subscribe to the despotism of kings. Their address was headed by two lines, importing that the most sacred of duties, the dearest of laws, was to forget the law to save the country†. They termed the King a contemptible tyrant; and, without wasting time in the recapitulation of his errors, his crimes, and his perjuries, invoked the people to rise, to declare that he had ceased to be King. "Let us strike," they said, "the colossal statue of despotism, let it fall, and at the sound of its fracture let tyrants tremble, even to the extremities of the globe.‡" When these papers were presented, the indignation of

* See the debates in the Moniteur.

† Le devoir le plus saint, la loi la plus chérie,
Est d'oublier la loi, pour sauver la patrie.

‡ Le parjure est vertu, quand on promet un crime.—Moniteur, 5th Aug. p. 918.

the Assembly against the insults offered to them was invoked in vain: Cambon said that royalty must perish, if it struggled against the sovereignty of the nation; and the Assembly, if they severed themselves from it, ought also to perish. A great body who attended required leave to make a procession through the hall, but only twenty were admitted.*

These instances are recorded, not as a detail, but as specimens of the proceedings of the city, impelled by the Jacobins and encouraged by the Mayor. An insurrection was determined on, and, far from its being a secret, the hour when the tocsin was to sound, and the places where the parties were to assemble, were fixed and declared.† The sittings of the Sections were established in permanence, and the Assembly adopted the same course. Petitions against the King and in support of a national convention were received with acclamations, while those of a contrary tendency were treated with contempt by the members, and motions in support of them overruled by the *a bas!* of the galleries. Petion, when called before them, declaimed against any appeal to the public force, and recommended persuasion and confidence. Members adverse to the popular proceedings were insulted in the hall, and menaced and assaulted in the streets; and, in fact, there was no government but that of the mob and its leaders‡.

At midnight, according to the plan arranged, the tocsin gave the dreadful signal of insurrection; the *générale* was beat; all the municipality and commune, except Petion, Danton, and Manuel, were dismissed, and, in their stead, a hundred and ninety-two commissioners were elected, Huguenin being president, and Tallien secretary. While the conspirators were preparing for the insurrection, the friends of the King, with means far disproportioned, laboured for his preservation. Mandat, commander-in-chief of the national guard, was loyal and firm; sixteen picked battalions of his force marched to the palace, and, by six o'clock in

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August 5th.

Preparations
for an insur-
rection.

9th.

10th.
It breaks out.

* Moniteur, 5th August, p. 922.

† La Vallée, tome i. p. 274.

‡ Moniteur, 5th August, p. 940, et passim.

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the preceding evening, all the posts had been trebled: the officers of the disbanded constitutional guard, with a great many gentlemen and royalists, assembled in the *cœil de bœuf*, armed with swords and pistols. Petion had given Mandat a written order to repel force by force; and the royalists swore to shed the last drop of their blood in protecting the person and family of their sovereign. A reinforcement of two thousand four hundred national guards arrived, with eleven pieces of cannon; but many of these, and all the artillerymen, were devoted to the revolutionary faction. Roused by the tocsin and the *générale*, a few members of the legislature began, at one o'clock, to assemble in the hall; at two, they were sufficiently numerous to transact business; Petion repaired to the Hotel de Ville, where he was placed under a guard of three hundred men, who secured him from being required to interfere.

The new commune next summoned Mandat before them; at first he refused, but, the command being more peremptorily repeated, reluctantly obeyed. He was ordered to the Abbaye; but, on quitting the room, was shot and stabbed, the order of Petion taken from his person, and his corpse thrown into the Seine. Santerre being now appointed to the chief command, removed from the Pont-neuf the battalions placed by his predecessor to prevent the junction of the insurgents from the opposite side of the river, and scattered all the troops who were attached to the King in such a manner that their exertions could be of no avail. Louis descended, at half-past five o'clock, into the court-yard, and, attended by the Queen, the Princess Elizabeth, and his children, inspected the posts, and reviewed the guards. At first, he was greeted only with the loyal exclamation, "*Vive le Roi!*" but the artillerymen cried "*Vive la nation!*" and two new battalions, arriving during the review, raised shouts of "*Vive Petion!*" while others without exclaimed, "*A bas le veto! A bas le traître!*"

The insurrection had three central points; the Jacobin club, the Cordeliers, and the faubourg St. Antoine. Danton, in a voice of thunder, harangued the Marseillois, incensing them against the Royal Family,

affirming that the perfidious Louis had chosen that night to deliver Paris up to carnage and conflagration ; while Brunswick and Bouillé had declared in their manifestos that they would not leave one stone upon another. “ Let future ages,” he exclaimed, “ say—‘ On “ ‘ the tenth of August the French people emancipa- “ ‘ ted themselves from slavery and misery.’—‘ To arms ! “ to arms !”

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As the insurgents approached, the King sent to apprise the Assembly of his danger ; and, soon yielding to insidious persuasions and perfidious promises, he repaired with his family to their hall. The palace was attacked and carried ; the brave Swiss guards, and all who defended, and all who were found in it, down even to the door-keepers and the lowest menials, were massacred with savage barbarity, and their remains, after having been exposed to unspeakable insults, were paraded through the streets as trophies. To detail the scenes which are recorded on this day of horrors, would be a task equally repugnant to decency and humanity.

After remaining within the walls of the Assembly, in a box used by the reporters, two days, during which they were continually exposed to disgusting insults, the Royal Family were removed, first to the Luxembourg, and finally to the Temple. These decrees were forced on by deputations from the mob, who declared that the carnage should not cease, nor the burning of the Tuileries be extinguished, until the forfeiture of the crown was decreed*.

The King and family imprisoned.

30th.

At last, in a tumultuous assembly, where less than three hundred deputies were mixed with a countless and squalid rabble of men, women, and children, Vergniaud presented the report of the committee of twelve ; and the Assembly pronounced the decree for suspending the royal functions, and calling a national convention. Having gratified the people by printing and publishing this decree, the Assembly voted their sittings permanent, till the meeting of the new legislature ; the establishment of a camp under the walls of Paris, to be formed of all citizens who chose to

Royal authority suspended.

A convention decreed.

* La Vallée, tom i. p. 297.

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enlist; authorized domiciliary visits, for the purpose of seizing arms concealed in the houses of suspected persons; recalled Roland, Clavière, and Servan, to the administration; joining to them, Danton, as minister of justice; Monge, minister of the marine; and Le Brun to the foreign department. And these men were invested, *pro tempore*, with the executive power. The sum of these proceedings was imparted to the public by a placard profusely displayed, stating the suspension, the detention of the King and his family as hostages, the change of ministers, and the abolition of the civil list.

Statues of
kings de-
stroyed.

Having thus disposed of their living King and his friends, the mob exhaled the remainder of their fury on the statues of his predecessors. Louis the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth, were hurled from their pedestals, without a moment's remorse; but, with respect to Henry the Fourth, so long a proverbial favourite, a short interval of doubt prevailed. His statue on the Pont-neuf, so long the rendezvous of the afflicted and distressed, who habitually invoked his virtues and his benevolence, was, with some reluctance, sacrificed, in expiation of his crime in having been a King*.

Proceedings of
Lafayette.

Lafayette, when he rejoined his army, shewed no more spirit or judgment than in his visit to Paris. He returned; but no one could imagine why he had gone; and, although he could not have been insensible to the perils of his situation, he took no care to surround himself with devoted friends and determined associates; but, without prudential forecast, awaited the course of events. In Paris, he relied on the strength of the constitutional party, who avowed him as their head; but he sought not to aid them with advice, or serve them by exertion. Nor could his inertness be attri-

* Lacrételle, Thiers, and all preceding historians agree in the facts here stated; for copious details, see *Mémoires sur Marie Antoinette*, par Madame Campan, tom. ii. p. 227. *Dernier Tableau de Paris*, par Peltier, tom. i. p. 9 to 208. *La Vallée*, tom. i. p. 274 to 304. *Historical and Political Account by a National Guard. Short Account of the Revolt and Massacre, &c.* Weber's *Memoirs of Marie Antoinette*, vol. iii. p. 86. Apologies for the Conduct of the Insurgents appeared under the title of a *Narrative of the Proceedings relative to the Suspension of the King of the French, August the tenth, 1792*, by Condorcet: they were translated and published, together with the justificatory address of the National Assembly, under the direction of Mr. Cooper, at Manchester.

buted to want of correct information. Even if he had had no friendly correspondents in the capital, every daily paper reported proceedings in the Assembly, the clubs, and the streets, quite sufficient to alarm his mind as to his own perils, the danger of the constitution in which he delighted, and which he had by such dishonourable means contributed to establish, and the miserable condition of the Royal Family, reduced by his efforts to the state which enabled the basest of mankind to triumph over and torment them.

Repeated motions were made in the Assembly, accompanied with vituperative harangues, until, at length, on a full discussion, it was decreed that there was no ground of accusation against him. The members and the galleries, not satisfied with the first announcement of this result, insisted on a division by persons, or an appel nominal, when the numbers shewed an unexpectedly great majority in his favour*. One of the charges against him was, that he had endeavoured to prevail on Marshal Luckner to join him with a portion of his troops, and march against Paris†. This accusation was not proved, nor was it consistent with the character of Lafayette. Had he possessed the energy requisite for such an effort, he might still, aided by his party in the legislature, have checked, or even destroyed, the King's oppressors. It is observed, by a republican writer, that, after his letter to the Assembly, the General shared with the King the hatred of the people‡. This is so true, that some members who voted in his favour were grossly insulted before they quitted the hall, and were afterward beset and their lives endangered in the streets. After the tenth of August, all busts and pictures of him were sought out and destroyed. He was at Sedan when these events occurred, and gained, by accident, earlier information than any other person; but still adopted no effectual proceedings. He contented himself with requiring the army to renew their oath to support the constitution: but even this was not generally performed;

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July 15, 29.
August 3.
He is ac-
quitted by the
Assembly.
8th.

Hatred of the
people against
him.

His feeble
conduct.

* 406 to 224. † Debates, August 3. ‡ D'Aumont, p. 11.

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19th.

His accusation
decreed.

14th.

He arrests the
the Commis-
sioners.

His flight.

19th.

Is captured,

and impri-
soned.

Observations.

and a proclamation, which he addressed to the municipality of Sedan and to the army, was coldly received by them, and violently resented in Paris.

A decree of accusation was imperiously demanded by the popular assemblies, who shewed themselves as commanders, not petitioners ; and three commissioners, Kersaint, Antonelle, and Peraldi, were dispatched, as it was said, to enlighten the army, but, as it was believed, to arrest the General. If such was their real mission, they were anticipated ; for Lafayette put them under arrest, declaring that they should remain as hostages for the Royal Family. This was his last act of authority ; a decree of accusation had been obtained, and, at a review of his troops, he found them little inclined to support him : murmurs were heard in the ranks, and even demands that the imprisoned commissioners should be liberated. Fresh commissioners were dispatched, with powers more definite than the former, and with prudent instructions to keep their persons safe from his authority. That authority was no more : feeling that he had misused all opportunities of making himself eminent, or promoting any public interest, he terminated, for the time, his political existence by flight. Accompanied by his Aides-de-camp, by Latour Maubourg, Bureau de Puzey, Alexander Lameth, and nineteen other partizans, he left his quarters in the night, intending, as he said, to pass behind the Austrian camp to Maestricht, then through Holland, to gain the shores of England, and thence depart to America ; but, at Rochefort, they were taken prisoners by a detachment of Limbourg volunteers.

The allies, after some deliberation, sent Lafayette, Bureau de Puzy, Alexander Lameth, and Latour Maubourg, who had been members of the Constituent Assembly, into close confinement, successively at Madgebourg, Glatz, Wesal, Neiss, and finally at Olmutz. The laws of war, perhaps, justified this detention ; but the conduct of the allies was deficient in wisdom and in greatness. Chance, and not any common event, had thrown the prisoners into their hands ; and, as they were evidently devoid of all inimical intentions,

magnanimity would have been shewn in treating them like men who, endeavouring to escape from a pirate, were shipwrecked on a hostile coast. To have sent them back, would have been to place their throats under the blade of the assassin; but to have let them go forward, according to their declared intention, would have been merciful, and, at the same time, from the sunk state of Lafayette's character and extinction of all his pretensions, perfectly safe. His political crimes were, no doubt, bitterly and justly remembered; no one could look at the deserter, and recollect Versailles, Varennes, the Tuileries, and the Temple, without profound emotions of indignation; but the indignation of sovereigns, if it does not exhale in sudden acts, degrades their character, by assuming the appearance of malignity and persecution. Lafayette at large, whether in Europe or in America, was perfectly innoxious; in a dungeon, he formed a theme alike to those who held him in respect and those who did not. His treatment was calculated to exasperate and unite all Frenchmen against the invaders and their cause. It shewed that the stain of political sin was indelible; that pardon was not to be obtained by repentance, nor mercy by misfortune. He and his companions signed a protest against their detention*, which the allies treated with disregard: the National Assembly confiscated their estates†.

When Dumouriez had obtained a declaration of war, he was ready, as minister, with a plan of campaign. His principal aim was to wrest the Netherlands from the house of Austria; and, for that purpose, the operations of force were preceded by the arts of seduction: emissaries were employed to foment a hatred of the Emperor's dominion, and still more to inspire a taste for the French system of freedom. Clubs of disaffected subjects from Brabant and Flanders were formed in Paris, and correspondences maintained with some of their countrymen. The plan of invasion

Conduct of
Dumouriez.

* *Dernier Tableau de Paris*, tome ii. p. 160. *Mémoires de l'Abbé Georgel*, tome iii. p. 459.

† *Histoires* Lacrételle, tome ix. p. 264. *Thiers*, tome iii. p. 33. *Ségur*, *Règne de Frédéric Guillaume II.* tome ii. p. 269 to 297.

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1792.

State of the
armies.July 6.
Dumouriez at
Maulde.He is made
commander-
in-chief.Conduct of the
allies.

had twice failed, through the misconduct of the French troops at Quiévrain, Lille, Mons, and Porentruy. Their force was divided into three armies, styled the North, the Centre, and the South; one commanded by Marshal Luckner, a veteran, who had gained reputation in the seven years' war, but was deemed fit only for the command of a detachment or a foraging party; Marshal Rochambeau, whose only experience in military affairs was gained in the American war; and Lafayette, whose instruction in the field was equally limited. To delays in forwarding their military necessities and reinforcements, or the quantity and quality of them, the officers attributed their first disasters. On his retiring from administration, Dumouriez went to serve at Valenciennes, under Luckner. He was ill received, and employed, in a sort of military exile, in the camp of Maulde. Having more experience, judgment, and genius, than all his superiors, he waited for the event which he foresaw—the ascendancy of the Jacobin party, and sagaciously employed himself in giving discipline to his troops, and, at the same time, gaining their confidence and affection. In these efforts he succeeded so well, that he was able to resist the orders of his superiors when they were contrary to his judgment, and to forward the views of the Republican or Orléans party, whenever he should think it prudent to declare for either. After the flight of Lafayette, he became commander-in-chief, and the defence of the country devolved upon him.

Had a good spirit and uniform views governed the allies, the campaign would have been successful and glorious; but it was evident that they had not agreed upon any end, or even upon the means they should employ, if they might, under favourable circumstances, select one final course among many. To save the King, and to re-establish royalty, was the outline of their intent; but whether this expression included the resumption of all ancient prerogatives and privileges, and the extinction of all appearance of national representation, was never clearly defined; and the Republican party, turning this uncertainty to their ad-

vantage, did not fail to represent the allied sovereigns as having at heart the restoration of all abuses, the execution of unlimited vengeance, and, under pretence of indemnities, the dismemberment of the country. It is said that the King of Prussia, animated by an heroic spirit, was anxious to press forward to Paris; but that the Duke of Brunswick, dissatisfied, perhaps, that the campaign that he had advised was not agreed upon, co-operated coldly, and obstructed military movements by languor and delay.

Consistently with the common rules of prudence, the manifesto forced upon the Duke of Brunswick*, could not have been issued, until the allies were at the gates of Paris, or in some position calculated to give them a commanding sway; and if promulgated even then, it should have been accompanied with declarations from the allies, the emigrant princes, and Louis himself, tending to animate generous feelings among the friends of the royal cause, and remove from them the shame of being actuated by fear and selfishness only. Imprudent as it was, after it had once been published, it should have been followed by acts of corresponding energy; but it happened that, from the beginning of hostilities, every act done by the allied sovereigns was calculated to weaken their cause; their delays seemed to denote a want of mutual confidence, and gave to their opponents abundant time to rally their spirits and combine their means of defence. In all their proceedings, the allies showed and avowed the mistaken notion that France would not dare to resist them. They treated the invasion as a mere military promenade, and fell into all the errors and absurdities incident to such a delusion†, the effect of which was naturally increased by the early events of the war, the

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The Duke of
Brunswick.

Observations
on his mani-
festo.

Feeble con-
duct of the
allies.

* He used to call it "the deplorable manifesto," and spoke of it even in stronger terms of disapprobation.—*Mémoires d'un Homme d'État*, tome i p. 430.

† A curious specimen of the extent to which this error was carried is given by an author on whom I have much relied. "Bischofswerder said to several officers of distinction, 'Do not waste your money in purchasing too many horses; the comedy cannot last long. The fumes of liberty are evaporating in Paris; the army of lawyers will soon be annihilated in Belgium, and toward the autumn we shall all be at home again.'"—*Mémoires d'un Homme d'État*, tome i. p. 371.

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Plan of cam-
paign.

scenes at Lille and Mons, the insubordination of the French troops, and the flight of Lafayette.

The plan of the campaign and the state of the opposed forces are thus detailed. A hundred and thirty-eight thousand men, perfectly organised and disciplined, were collected against France, which could oppose to them at the most only a hundred and twenty thousand, spread over an immense frontier, forming on no point a sufficient mass; deprived of their officers, having no confidence in themselves, and dispirited by the ill success which had hitherto attended their efforts. It was intended boldly to invade the country, penetrating through the Ardennes, and advancing, by way of Chalons, to Paris. This route was exempt from the difficulty which would have presented itself in any other direction, the necessity of taking a large number of fortresses, which would have required lingering sieges, and, if captured, numerous garrisons.

A meeting took place between the Emperor and King of Prussia, at Mayence. Sixty thousand Prussians, strong in artillery and cavalry, but deficient in infantry, marched by the way of Luxembourg against Longwy. Twenty thousand Austrians, commanded by Clerfaye, supported them on their right, occupying Stenay. Sixteen thousand Austrians under the Prince of Hohenlohe Kirchberg; and ten thousand Hessians flanked the Prussians on the left. The Duke of Saxe-Teschen occupied the Low Countries, threatening the French fortresses. The Prince of Condé, with six thousand emigrants, had marched toward Philipsbourg; and several other detachments of the same body were scattered in various parts*.

The emigrants.

Ever since the princes and their immediate friends had quitted their country, the emigrants were to the revolutionists a theme of perpetual abuse, and the dupes of their artful devices; for, while emigration was censured in the most virulent terms, whole bodies of men were driven to adopt it as the only chance of saving their lives, and the frontiers were always left open for their escape. The motives of the first emigrants were

* Principally from Thiers, tome iii. p. 41.

pure, although their proceedings were unwise, unmanly, and injurious to their sovereign; but their numbers were afterward increased by new comers, of doubtful principles and equivocal character; suspicions were generated, and, at length, a total separation of some part from the rest became inevitable. Their principal assemblage was at Coblenz, where the Count d'Artois, with a number of wealthy princes and nobles, created the splendour, the agitation, the profusion, and the etiquette of a Court, while the less fortunate emigrants resided at Worms, where the Prince of Condé, by maintaining more regularity and better discipline, produced a striking difference. Coblenz was styled the Court, Worms the Camp. The emigrants felt a confident assurance of speedily regaining their lost ascendancy, which experience could not restrain, nor disappointment abate. In the rashness of their hope they maintained that, although their numbers were small, they were more than sufficient to enter France, and that the name of Condé, with the display of a white handkerchief, would give triumph to their cause. By degrees, a system of regularity was formed. The emigrants were classed by corps and by provinces, and furnished with arms; the King's body guards were again clothed, equipped, and paid, and soon became conspicuous in appearance and discipline; and arrangements were made for their mode of conduct, when they should, as they expected, re-enter France, and be joyfully received by vast multitudes.

These brilliant hopes were doomed to utter disappointment, when the invading army came to be formed. All opportunity of distinguishing themselves, or even of proving whether the spirit which was beginning to be displayed in La Vendée existed, or could be excited in other parts of France, was withheld from them. Instead of exhibiting a body of twenty-five thousand men, a great portion of whom were qualified to take a distinguished lead as officers; instead of appearing in the van, led by French princes and displaying the ancient banner of their country, they were parcelled out in small divisions: six thousand under the Prince

Treatment of
the emigrants.

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1792.

Tardiness of
the allies.

20th.

of Condé, in Alsace; four thousand, under the Duke of Bourbon, in Flanders; from twelve to fifteen thousand went with the Prussians to invade Champagne; but, as if it had been feared, rather than desired, that their presence should produce any good effect, they felt themselves prisoners rather than allies; they were kept four days' march in the rear, and so hemmed in that they could not attempt any separate movement, or even receive any special communication. At last, as if in mockery, they were sent, with means ludicrously inadequate, to form the siege of Thionville. Their miserable supply of artillery precluded all hopes from an assault; and had the governor, from principle, been inclined to capitulate, the besiegers exhibited nothing which could furnish him with a pretext*.

If the allies, in pursuance of some well-digested plan, had been as anxious to press forward as they were to keep the emigrants at a distance, a fortunate result might have attended the campaign; but their tardiness exceeds all power of reasoning and calculation. Their formidable manifesto was like blank cartridge fired over the heads of insurgents; it made a noise, but rather animated and encouraged, than alarmed, those to whom it was directed. They might have crossed the frontier before the beginning of August; they kept back until three weeks after. The flight of Lafayette and his staff would have left his army almost helpless, had they been attacked; but the opportunity was overlooked, as of no importance; the fugitive leader had not disgraced himself by joining the enemy, or informing him how to assail the troops he had abandoned; but the mere nature of their situation was sufficient to instruct an able and active chief-tain to turn the event to the utmost advantage. Had their own princes been permitted to appeal to the people, it is not improbable that a great portion, if not all, would have joined in a march to Paris, to rescue their sovereign, and to restrain, if not punish, his oppressors.

* From Las Cases' Journal of the private Life and Conversations of the Emperor Napoleon, vol. iii. p. 94. et seqq. This writer, it is to be observed, was one of the emigrants, an eye witness of the scene he describes.

Longwy was the first place invested by the Prussians; it might have resisted for some time; but, after a bombardment of fifteen hours, the inhabitants compelled the governor to capitulate, and the King of Prussia took possession of the town in the name of the King of France. Five days were wasted at this place, when the Duke of Brunswick marched to attack Verdun. This town made as little resistance as Longwy, and the governor, M. de Beaurepaire, indignant at the hasty surrender, shot himself. He was honoured by the republicans as a martyr, while M. de Lavergne, who had been compelled to give up Longwy, was arrested, tried, and condemned as a traitor, and the Assembly decreed, that when the town should be restored to France, every house it contained, public buildings excepted, should be rased to the ground.

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1792.
23rd.
Surrender of
Longwy.

29th.
and Verdun.

During these transactions, Paris exhibited a scene equally disgusting and appalling. After the deposition of the King, the ministers from foreign courts withdrew; there was, in fact, no regular government: the Assembly had neither the courage to maintain any authority, nor the virtue to form a determination not to sit as mock representatives, when every semblance of rule was withdrawn from them, and all shew of respect withheld. The six Jacobin ministers formed one executive council; the committee of the forty-eight sections, and all the justices of peace in Paris, were suspended; the staff of the gendarmerie was disbanded, and the command of the whole national guard of Paris confided to Santerre. A special tribunal was created, to prosecute the authors of the crimes committed on the tenth; for, strange to say, the royalists were accused as the aggressors on that occasion, and several suffered death* by the judgment of this court, from whose decision there was no appeal. Plunder and victims were the great aims of the party which

13th to 21st,
State of Paris.

11th.

19th.

17th.

Decrees
against
emigrants.

* It may be mentioned here, that by a decree of the Constituent Assembly (3rd June, 1790) the punishment of death was limited to cutting off the head, by a machine called the guillotine. This name, rendered afterward horribly familiar, was taken from that of a physician, who claimed the honour of the invention, although it had been, centuries before, used in Scotland, and called the Maiden. — See Chamberlayne's State of Great Britain.

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1792.

and priests.

Domiciliary
visits.The prisons
filled.General ap-
prehension of
a great crisis.Petion appears
at the bar.

31st.

His altered
condition.Speech of
Tallien.

had gained such fatal ascendancy. The estates of emigrants were ordered to be sold, in small lots, in order, as François de Neufchateau, the projector of the decree, said, to attach the inhabitants of the country to the revolution; the fathers, mothers, wives, and children of these persons were compelled to reside in their communes, and all the non-juring priests were banished from the French territory.

Prisoners, without number, were collected all over the country, but particularly in Paris. A new mode of tyranny, called a domiciliary visit, took away from every man the protection of his own dwelling. These visits were performed by day and by night, at the discretion of armed men, who arrested every one whom they chose to suspect; and to resist or any way impede them, incurred the punishment of death. This mode of proceeding was founded on a proposition of Danton. In his office, and under his eye, lists of proscription were formed, and, by the aid of the new system, the victims were seized and conveyed to prison. In their number were included clergy and nobles, courtiers and ladies, all whom political or anti-religious fanaticism would wish to destroy; and many whose only offence was that some political leader was interested in their destruction, or that by their death the evidence of some act of venality or treachery of the demagogues would be suppressed. All Paris felt that some dreadful crisis was approaching, which no effort was made to avert, but its direction was left to those who expected from it their own advantage. In consequence of complaints against their illegal and tyrannical proceedings, Petion, at the head of a body of the commune, appeared at the bar of the Assembly; but no longer that formidable Petion, whose word governed the city, whose cause interested and inflamed the whole revolutionary body; his short-lived popularity was decayed, or rather he was thrown away as a thing no longer useful. He stammered forth a few words; but the more intrepid Tallien, while he disclosed the views of his faction, did not omit to remind the legislators of their abjectness and insignificance. He claimed for the

commune a direct commission, with unlimited powers for the people, to save the country. The legislative body, he said, had been long surrounded by the respect of the citizens of Paris; its precinct had never been sullied, except by the presence of the worthy descendant of Louis the Eleventh, and the rival of Catherine of Medicis. "These tyrants still live; but they owe it only to the respect of the people for the National Assembly. Entrusted with the charge of saving the country," he proceeded, "we have cashiered justices of the peace, unworthy of that title, and we have discharged a municipality of feuillants. We have issued no order adverse to the liberty of good citizens, but we make it our glory that we have sequestered the goods of emigrants; we have arrested conspirators, and put them into the hands of tribunals for their own good and that of the state. We have driven out the monks and nuns, to sell the houses they occupied. We have proscribed incendiary journals, for they corrupted the public mind. We have made domiciliary visits; you authorized us, and we have brought the arms found in the possession of suspected persons, to supply the defenders of the country. We have ordered the arrest of turbulent priests, and in a few days the soil of liberty shall be purged of their presence." This harangue, which concluded with an appeal to the people met in the primary assemblies, was heard by the senators with undissembled terror, a feeling not a little enhanced by the cries which proceeded from an immense mob collected without. A portion of them forced their way into the hall, and one of their chiefs claimed the privilege which had been allowed on the 20th of June, in these terms:—"People in the galleries! National Assembly! and you, Mr. President! we come in the name of the people, who are at the door, to demand that they may file off through the hall, that they may see the representatives of the commune; we will die with them, if necessary." The appalled President said the commissioners were in no danger; the procession through the hall did not take place, but the whole

The mob
insult the
Assembly.

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Sept. 1.
Preparations
for a massacre.

transaction shewed the unlimited power of the commune, and the complete subjugation of the legislature.

A decree of the commune was speedily published, commanding that the barriers should be closed, horses and arms seized, and every exertion made to assemble a force of sixty thousand volunteer recruits; but preparations had been perfected for a horrible scene. On the day appointed for the enrolment, it was asserted that the Prussians, having taken Chalons, were within ten leagues of Paris; they were to be joined by an immense body in the departments, and reinforced by a party in the capital, who, on the departure of the new levies, would rise, open the prisons, murder the patriots and one-tenth of the citizens, release the Royal Family, and reinstate the King in his pristine power.

Sept 2nd.
Massacre
begun.

At one o'clock the cannon was fired, the tocsin sounded, the barriers were shut, and the country proclaimed in danger. The citizens, panic-struck, and torpid with surprise, retired to their habitations, while a prepared band of assassins went to the various prisons, where they massacred, one by one, the priests and Swiss officers; instituting in each prison a pretended court, composed of self-constituted judges, many of them foreigners, and many more who could not read. These ruffians ordered the execution of almost every person brought before them; and it was the melancholy employment of those confined, and expecting their fate, to examine the various modes of receiving the stroke of death, and calculate in which position it appeared to give least pain, or occasion the smallest struggles. The sentence of acquittal pronounced in favour of a few, was drowned in the yell of the exterminators around the doors, and they too were inhumanly butchered. The terrors of some who attended as witnesses overcoming their presence of mind, they were murdered amongst the other victims. The horrors of this butchery, so supine was the government, so corrupt or so appalled the citizens, lasted four days, and in the midst of it priests were seen, with saint-like charity, praying, in their last moments,

and continued.

2nd, 3rd, 4th,
and 5th.

for their assassins ; and some individuals, even young females, rescuing, by desperate efforts, their parents from impending destruction. An instance or two of relenting virtue may be produced on the part of the murderers ; but in general they displayed an uncompromising ferocity, with the sedate malignity of veteran practisers. Hacking and hewing dead and living bodies with blunt instruments, tearing out entrails, drinking and smearing themselves with blood, and parading the city with heads and hearts on pikes, were the characteristic employments of these sanguinary savages ; while thirty thousand national guards rested on their arms without offering the slightest resistance.

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The fate of the Princess de Lamballe was, on every account, entitled to deep commiseration. She was the widow of the Duc de Penthièvre, and intitled for life to an annuity of three hundred thousand livres (12,500*l.*), charged on the estates of the Duke of Orléans. She was favoured by the Queen, but had never been supposed to be implicated in any political intrigue. She was present on the 20th of June, and on the 10th of August accompanied her royal friend to the Temple, but was dragged from her side to the prison of La Force. Her exemplary character, her youth, and her beauty, might have excited the compassion even of savages ; but her death was decreed, and, it is said, the price of it was paid. She was brought before the tribunal established in the prison, and, on refusing to take the oath of hatred to the Royal Family, inhumanly murdered, and her body mangled, tortured, and exposed in a manner too indecent for description, and her head and heart, stuck on the point of a pike and a sword, were carried in barbarous procession to the Temple, for the purpose of terrifying and insulting the royal captives. Her head was also carried to the Palais Royal, where the Duke of Orléans was at dinner ; all the guests uttered a cry of horror, but he contemplated the bloody trophy without emotion*. The total number of victims is calculated

The Princess
de Lamballe.

* Lacrétielle, tome ix. p. 326.

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by some writers at eight thousand; others reduce it to five thousand; and the number was speedily augmented by the murder at Versailles of fifty-seven individuals, who were being conveyed from Orléans to Paris for trial, and twenty-one who had been committed to the prison of that town. Danton said to the murderers, "It is not the minister of Justice, it is the "minister of the Revolution, that thanks you for your "laudable fury." These sentiments were more fully expressed in a circular, signed by seven persons (Marat was of the number), styling themselves administrators of the committee of public welfare, and countersigned by Danton; it vindicated the atrocious acts which had taken place, and recommended the example to the departments. This horrible exhortation produced but a limited effect: at Meaux, Rheims, and Lyons, the prison doors were forced, and twelve or fifteen persons put to death in each place*.

Lawless state
of Paris.

In Paris, crime stalked abroad, undisguised and unrestrained. Parties in the streets raised the cry of aristocrat against any well-dressed man or woman, and the sacrifice of money, watches, trinkets, or any other valuables they might possess, could alone insure their safety. The domiciliary visits furnished opportunities for unmeasured plunder; and finally, by robbers, who never were detected, the garde-meuble-de-la-couronne, or jewel office, was broken into and emptied of property to a very great, but unascertained, amount†. The debased Assembly exhibited occasional signs of indignation at its own insignificance, and a sense of the evils which beset the state; but they had neither virtue to desire, nor vigour to enforce, any truly beneficial regulation.

Election of
members to the
Convention.

In this period, the election of deputies to the National Convention was proceeding, and the efforts of

* *Revue Chronologique*, p. 142. For the general events of these dreadful days, I have consulted all the histories, particularly Lacrételle, tom. ix. p. 286 to 354, in whose narrative many interesting and affecting particulars are detailed. Thiers, tome iii. p. 56 to 91. To these authorities an ample addition may be made: they were all consulted by me, in preparing a former work. *Biographical Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 322, and the authorities there cited.

† Lacrételle, tome ix. p. 364.

1792.

11th Aug.

party were never strained to a higher pitch, nor the effects of influence more visible. The National Assembly, too abject and crouching to decree, invited all citizens, in the name of liberty, equality, and the country, to conform to certain rules which they proposed. For the primary assemblies, the distinction between active and non-active citizens was not to exist: it sufficed that a man should have attained the age of twenty-one, and have been an inhabitant, living on his property or by his labour for one year. Any man, possessing these qualifications, and having attained twenty-five years, might be an elector or a deputy; he was not required to be a Frenchman, or to possess any property; and the Convention was to meet in forty days*.

Under such a system, it is easy to imagine what the elections must have been in the capital and great towns. In Paris, the Jacobins domineered with unresisted sway, and their affiliated societies received instructions from the central club, which, if not always successfully followed, produced great effect.

State of parties.

Open war now raged between the two parties, called Brissotines or Girodins, and Jacobins. The Brissotines, after favouring, as against the Court, all the principles and all the acts which led to the late massacres, had affected to declaim, and they did nothing more, most violently against them. By this conduct they placed themselves, with respect to popular obloquy, into the very situation in which they had driven the Court: to appear their partizan was, among the popular majority, a title to hatred and contempt; and although they were not yet completely trampled under foot by their adversaries, the final issue of the conflict could not be doubted. In Paris, Petion, so lately adored—he for whom, on the fourteenth of July, the people inscribed on their banner, “Petion or death,” could not, now, after the lapse of two little months, be received as one of the deputies by whom the city was to be represented. Nor did his influence fail merely

* *Moniteur*, 13th Aug. 1792, p. 950.

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The Duke of
Orléans
changes his
name to
Egalité,

September 21.
The National
Convention
assembled.

Parties.

because he was opposed by men of superior talent ; for, although that superiority might be alleged in favour of Robespierre, Danton, Camille Desmoulins, and two or three others, yet surely Marat, Collet d'Herbois the player, and Legendre the butcher, presented no such claims ; and, by force of influence, Robespierre the younger, and many others whose names had never before been heard of, were returned for Paris, while he renounced the mayoralty to take a seat, under the protection of Brissot, for the department of Eure et Loire.

The Duke of Orléans was returned a deputy for the capital, having first renounced his family, and taken what he styled the beautiful name of Egalité. As foreigners were not ineligible, Anacharsiz Clootz, the Prussian, and some others, obtained seats : the compliment was offered to Dr. Priestley, but very properly refused ; while it was accepted with joy and pride by Thomas Paine.

At length, forty days having expired, the legislative assembly surrendered its authority to the National Convention. It had existed a year and three weeks, and in that whole period presented not a day which could be termed glorious, or even honourable. François de Neufchâteau, who was president, at the last moment addressed the new body in a quaint, affected speech, which all parties heard with undisguised contempt and ridicule. The Convention was divided into three parties ; the Gironde, the Mountain, and the Plain ; the first two animated by deadly hatred against each other ; the third, selfishly temporising to await events, promote their own interests, or, at least, secure their own safety. The Gironde, although they comprised many men of talent, were weighed down by their own inconsistencies and enfeebled by their timidity and irresolution. They occupied the right side, a position long devoted to the hatred of the populace. The Mountain, unprincipled and fearless, had not much to apprehend from such opponents ; all their measures were violent, all their steps decisive ; but their danger arose from their having no fixed point at

which their operations should terminate, and from their jealousy of each other*.

Petion was first called to the chair,—a momentary, but fruitless triumph to the Gironde; for when Manuel, who had recently joined them, proposed that increased honours and some personal privileges should be conferred on the president, the motion was strenuously resisted, particularly by Chabot and Tallien, and hooted down as an outrage upon equality, destructive of the general uniformity of sans-culottes, or, in one tremendous word, aristocratic. The Gironde, ascribing to themselves the glory of deposing the King, had prepared speeches and framed addresses to introduce and recommend their plans for the abolition of royalty; Manuel, hoping to retrieve the misfortune of his first step, moved that it should be one of the first points submitted to the consideration of the Convention; but the Jacobin, Collot d'Herbois, wrested from the adversary this expected trophy. He was astonished that any hesitation should be thought necessary on a measure so indispensable, and moved for an immediate vote on the question. With agonised feelings of disappointed pride, the right side joined in the acclamations which attended this proposition; they, like the others, vociferated the cry of "question," but fell back into their seats, indignant to see the honour of originating this measure carried off by an assassin of the second of September. A member of the middle party, or, of the Plain, as it was called, suggested a delay, until the crimes of the present King should have been decided on; but this attempt only furnished a new triumph to the Mountain. Gregoire, a constitutional bishop, in a vehement harangue, pressed the immediate abolition, declaring kings, in all their dynasties, to have been nothing but a devouring race, living on the blood of the people.

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First proceedings.

Abolition of
royalty
decreed.

* This jealousy was epigrammatically expressed by Danton, when he said, "So long as the people cry 'Robespierre and Danton,' we shall go on very well; but if once they cry 'Danton and Robespierre!' the conflict will be tremendous." From *Lacrételle*, tome ix. p. 355. The same author, tome x. liv. 13, gives a masterly account of the parties composing the Convention, both collectively and individually, and with equal spirit and truth anatomises the ministry, and the master of them all, the Jacobin club.

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Conduct of the
Duke of
Orléans.Effect of the
decree.Struggle of
parties.

In this Assembly sat the Duke of Orléans, affecting cheerfulness, and even an air of extravagant satisfaction, while he saw the promised harvest of so many crimes and so much baseness blasted by one single breath. In hopes that advantage might accrue from procrastination, Bazire, one of his party, suggested that it would be a frightful example, if an assembly of philosophers, to whom the greatest public interests were intrusted, should, in a moment of enthusiasm, form a decision so important, and which would doubtless be adopted by all the people of Europe; it was, at least deserving of a solemn discussion. Gregoire, proud of the applause he had already obtained, exclaimed, "What need is there of discussion, where all are of one mind? Kings are in the moral, what monsters are in the natural system; courts are the manufactories of crime, the focus of corruption; the history of kings is the martyrology of nations." Eloquence like this could not be resisted. When the decree was carried, all parties shouted "Vive la republique!" as if each were anxious to gain some ascendancy by the appearance of heartfelt joy. But when the proclamation was made, the people received it coldly, however they might join the feeling from which it proceeded; even the young and the hasty could not be proud of a boon conferred on them by a strolling player and an infidel priest*. A struggle, daily renewed, between the Brissotines and the Jacobins, tended constantly to limit the authority and destroy the popularity of the former party, and to extend the influence, reputation, and power of the other. By repeated expulsions of obnoxious members, the Jacobin club became a powerful and irresistible engine in the hands of the demagogues, and particularly of Robespierre, who might now be looked up to as governing the destinies of France. He was assailed with accusations; but in vain: he triumphed on every occasion, and the most formidable of all that were directed against him produced only a decree, that the republic was one and indivisible; an intelligible, though not express cen-

* Lacrételle, tome x. p. 11.

sure on the Girondists, who were accused of federalism, that is, a plan to divide the realm into several republics, all converging to one point and represented in one congress, the National Convention. This term, little understood by the million, was nevertheless, as "veto" had been, continually in their mouths, and always repeated to excite fury and violence. A new era was established, the date being "fourth year of liberty, first of equality." All signs of distinction were abolished; even the cross of St. Louis, the reward of military merit, spared by the Constituent Assembly, was no more to be allowed; and, it being said that fifty thousand had been issued which cost half-a-crown a-piece, the holders were required to bring them in, not as a patriotic gift, but as a restitution*. Kersaint, an admiral, set the example. The terms of civility so long prevailing, Monsieur and Madame, were exchanged for Citoyen and Citoyenne; thou and thee were substituted for the plural pronoun; and persons, in the conclusion of letters, no longer professed themselves "your humble servant," but "your equal." These specimens of coarseness would be far beneath notice; but they denote a complete vulgarising of the national mind, from which it is very difficult to recover, and which, while it expresses feelings of harshness, allies itself to acts of atrocity.

Turning from the legislature to the campaign, the errors of the invaders are sufficiently gross to justify an opinion, that, for some inscrutable reason, the chiefs who undertook to conduct it were deprived of their ordinary faculties of perception, and enervated to a degree which prevented all useful action.

After the conquest of Longwy, ten inestimable days were wasted; and, after the surrender of Verdun, still more time was squandered in useless delays. Some attempt, it is true, was made, at this place, to encou-

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New era.

Abolition of
the order of
St. Louis.
October 16th.

October 10th.
Terms of
civility sup-
pressed.

Progress of the
campaign.

Delays of the
invaders.

* The meanness of this decree is not less than its absurdity. Could all the crosses have been produced, which is impossible; could they all have realised what they were said to have cost, which is equally so; the sum added to the national treasure would have been £6250.

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Difference of
opinion among
them.

rage the appearance of a counter-revolution: the emblems of French liberty were displaced for those of royalty; an address of the most considerable inhabitants was presented to the King of Prussia; the Duke of Brunswick reinstated the local administrations; and the Catholic clergy were restored to their functions*.

A difference of opinion, fatal to all general operations, prevailed among the leaders of the allies. The Duke of Brunswick represented that, the King of France being dethroned and imprisoned and his party broken down in the interior, the royalists could no longer hope to effect a counter-revolution, but that the war should assume a regular and systematic character; that they should possess themselves of Montmedi, Sedan, and Thionville, and by no means venture to cross the Meuse, leaving those places in their rear. These opinions were disclosed at a council of officers before the capture of Verdun, but without convincing any of the party, except the Prussians. The French generals loudly exclaimed that their march to Paris should be accelerated; in that city, like the thunder-bolt, they should exhibit irresistible power, and not afford to the factious leisure to recollect themselves.

Errors of the
Duke of
Brunswick.

The King of Prussia adopted these sentiments; but, whether actuated by displeasure at the rejection of his advice, or misled by some general miscalculation, the Duke persisted in a dilatory and trifling mode of conduct. Among many errors, that which decided the campaign and the fate of France, was his neglect, during many days that it was in his power, to seize the passes of the Forest of Argonne, the only position of importance between him and the capital. This forest is a branch of the Ardennes, thirteen leagues in length, in breadth unequal, and so intersected with heights, streams, lakes, and marshes, as not to be traversed by an army, except at five passes of unequal width†. These would lead from a rich and fertile pro-

Forest of
Argonne.

* Mémoires d'un Homme d'État, tome i. p. 447.

† They were called Croix au bois, Grandpré, les Illottes, le Chêne populeux, and la Chalade.

vince, called Le Trois Evéchés, into Champagne, so sterile and naked, that it had obtained the characteristic nick-name of Pouilleuse.

When Dumouriez learned that the invaders had not occupied this forest, he fixed on it as the place where he should best defend the capital. "This," he said to his officers, "will be the Thermopylæ of France; if I reach it before the Prussians, all is safe." In this plan he persevered, disregarding, and even disobeying, the obstructions put in his way by the war minister, the commands of the legislature, the invectives of the Jacobins, the opposition of his own generals, and the undisguised dissatisfaction of his troops. By frequent skirmishes, he taught them the value of discipline, and no longer to over-value the vaunted tactics of their adversaries; and they were further encouraged by the daily augmentation of their force, which the unimpeded junction of Dillon, Kellerman, and Bournonville, detachments from the army of Luckner, and recruits from Paris, advanced, from less than twenty thousand, to nearly seventy thousand men.

These proceedings were viewed by the Duke of Brunswick with an indifference and an overweening confidence which are altogether unaccountable. His understanding and military experience stood too high to admit the supposition of absolute ignorance, and his honour was far above the imputation of any indirect motive; but such was his blindness, that, when informed of the efforts making by the French General to concentrate all the divisions of his army,—“So much the better,” he answered, in the phrase of markets; “taking them in a lump, we shall have them the cheaper.” Dumouriez found it necessary to retreat from Grandpré to St. Menehould. In performing this operation, an advanced guard of ten thousand men, attacked by fifteen hundred Prussian hussars, made little resistance, but, raising a cry that they were betrayed, fell into disorder, and, in their precipitate flight, spread, in Chalons and even in Paris, a report that Dumouriez was a traitor, and his army completely routed.

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Activity of
Dumouriez.

Inertness of
the Duke of
Brunswick.

Sept. 14.
A division of
the French
army defeated.

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Battle of Val-
my.
20th.

If this event tended to confirm the invaders in the opinion of their own invincible superiority, the next conflict, the battle of Valmy, completely dissipated the illusion. General Kellerman, who had been called upon to prevent the effect of a menaced attack upon Dumouriez; by incessant activity and by forced and night marches, arrived with the army of the Rhine, twenty-two thousand strong, at Dampierre-le-Chateau, and, taking up his positions in a most masterly manner, sustained the attack of the Prussian army. During a long, well-fought day, the French not only resisted, but repelled the assailants, compelled them to retreat, and remained masters of the field. This engagement was far less important in its military than in its moral effect. The French saw an overbearing enemy struck with astonishment, and, if not afraid, at least in a state of hesitation, in witnessing their high spirit, and hearing the cheering shouts which were repeated all along the line, as they charged with the bayonet. It imparted that confidence so necessary to military success; instead of distrusting themselves, or suspecting each other, they were animated by valour, and supported by a proud assurance that they were equal to every enterprise, however daring. "The victory of Valmy," a French author observes, "was a signal for all those which followed, and which, during the course of twenty years, gave to France her great military preponderance. It was the seed from which grew that widely branching tree which overshadowed all Europe*."

Critical situa-
tion of the
allies.

Not by this action alone, but by the course of events, and the effect of unaccountable misconduct, the fate of the invasion was soon decided. Attached to no consistent plan, the Duke of Brunswick had provided for no contingencies: if he had intended a regular campaign, his advance was too rapid, his retreat unprovided for, and his supplies not prepared; if a sudden march to Paris, the time he had lost, and the

* *Victoires, Conquêtes, Desastres, &c des François*, partie i. p. 38. Kellerman, the author adds, was the general to whom France owed this, the first victory of the revolution; and the glory of it was long afterward perpetuated in his own family, by the title conferred on him of Duke of Valmy,

means he had neglected, were unpardonable faults. When the French were sufficiently strong to defy his force and to hold him in check, the results of his errors became dreadfully evident. His supplies, drawn from distant towns, were often intercepted; the troops, for want of proper food, indulged in whatever productions of the earth chance threw into their hands, in such excess, that a dysentery raged among them with alarming violence.

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Before the battle of Valmy, negotiations for peace had been attempted. The liberation of Louis, and his restoration to the authority assigned to him by the constitution, were proposed by Prussia; but Dumouriez, although he avowed himself a strenuous friend of the constitutional monarchy, answered by producing a bulletin he had just received, containing the decree for the abolition of royalty. Many more interviews took place, and the state of affairs was vehemently debated, both in camp before the King of Prussia, and in Paris by the executive Council, when it was at last agreed that no battle should take place, but the Prussians be permitted to retire unmolested; an arrangement which was finally executed. Carra, a commissioner from the Convention to the army, truly said, in a letter to the minister Le Brun,—“By this forced retreat the republic is saved, and the enemy covered with shame and disgrace.”

Negotiations.

23rd.

Prussians permitted to retreat.

30th.

The retreat of the Prussians, which caused much speculation, and gave birth to many rumours, appeared to have been dictated by the circumstances already mentioned: the honourable zeal and heroic determination of Frederick William were curbed by the indecision or coldness of the Duke of Brunswick; but, from whatever cause that may really have proceeded, calumny endeavoured in vain to fix on his character charges of misdirected ambition or pecuniary corruption. It was even said that the King of France had been prevailed on to write from his prison, requesting the allies to retreat; but this assertion is fully disproved*. That the French should not be anxious to

Observations.

* The Last Years of Louis the Sixteenth, p. 397.

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prevent a retreat, on the speculation of destroying the invading army, is quite natural. By expelling them (to use their own phrase) from the soil of Liberty, enough of honour was gained to gild with glory the first days of the new republic; and schemes of conquest and aggrandizement, which they had formed and matured, rendered it expedient for them to release their armies from Champagne, that they might be employed in other directions.

The emigrants.

In all these transactions, the treatment of the emigrants, excites astonishment and indignation. From the deposition of the King, Monsieur claimed to be acknowledged by the allies as Regent of France; but letters and conferences produced no effect. There was an opposition which could not be surmounted, and has not been clearly defined, at the court of Vienna, and a determination was adopted, not only that such a title should not be admitted, but that no prominent share in the war should be assigned to these adherents of the throne. When a difficulty was made about attacking the army of Dumouriez, the Count d'Artois gallantly offered, on behalf of himself and his followers, to attempt the enterprize. "If we succeed," he said, "the objects of the war will be gained; if we fail, France will produce our avengers." This proposal was refused; and the definitive arrangements for a retreat were so utterly unknown to them, that they were in great danger of being taken prisoners by Dillon's army, after the Prussians had retreated, and were saved only by the peremptory interposition of the commissioners of the Convention. It has been observed, that, in the invaded provinces, not a man took up arms for the emigrants; and therefore they are accused of being themselves the dupes of unfounded expectations, or of wilfully deceiving the allied sovereigns*: but the answer is obvious; men could not be expected to take up arms for those who never were permitted to appear before them—for those whom the invaders seemed to consider, less as honourable allies, than as burthensome hangers-on. The fire of loyalty

* *Mémoires d'un Homme d'État*, tom. i. p. 453.

which, at the time, flamed out so fiercely in La Vendée, was surely not so entirely confined to that province, but that, animated by the presence of their nobles, and appealed to by their princes, a similar warmth might have been generated in other parts of France. The military and the respectable people who had testified just indignation at the twentieth of June and the tenth of August; the number in whose bosoms the sentiment of religion and of veneration for its teachers was not extinct, and many whom natural feeling and the sense of justice could impel, would probably have formed an irresistible union, had not their exertions been repressed by the want of proper leaders in their cause, by the absence of any appeal to their national feelings*. From this time the emigrants ceased to form a political or even a separate body; they were dispersed in different cities and countries throughout Europe and America. A body of them formed a regiment under the command of their princes; the residue maintained themselves by the small portions they had been able to rescue from the wreck of their property; some owed a subsistence to the learning and the arts which, in happier days, they had acquired as the graces or ornaments of life; some did not disdain to acquire and practise trades, and many subsisted on the benevolence of individuals, or on the public funds of the countries in which they had sought a refuge. A return to their native land was impossible; for, beside the previous confiscation of all their property, the Convention, by a decree, doomed to death all who might be found within the limits of the republic. Lists were formed to give effect to this law, and he who had his name inscribed

Laws against
them.

October 23.

* This observation has been made by many writers. General Dumouriez, who, in his *Mémoires*, and in conversation, professed himself to have been always a firm royalist, told me, that many years after these events, he was at Mittau, in conversation with Louis the Eighteenth, when, in allusion to these professions, his Majesty inquired, why, if such were his sentiments, he had not come over to him during the invasion. The General answered—"But where was your Majesty to be found? If I had seen a French standard displayed, I might have induced my troops to unite under it. I saw only the banners of Austria and Prussia, and surely your Majesty could not expect Frenchmen to march under them." For some judicious and statesman-like reflections on the subject of the Royalists, see Burke's *Remarks on the Policy of the Allies*, Works, vol. vii. p. 139.

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1792.

October 13, 22.
Verdun and
Longwy
evacuated.

in them was at once sentenced to death, without the allegation of any other crime, and without the possibility of an inquiry into the circumstances under which his absence from his country had taken place, or the manner in which he had been subsequently employed*.

To conclude the subject of this invasion, it may be added, that Verdun and Longwy were both surrendered by the Prussians, on condition that they should be allowed three days to evacuate them†.

* A lively description of the principles, divisions, merits, and follies of this body, and of the treatment they experienced, is given by Les Cases. *Journal*, vol. iii, part. i. p. 94 et seqq. He was one of them; but some deduction may be made from the exactness of his statement, when it is recollected that it was got up at St. Helena, at the desire and for the amusement of Napoleon in his exile. His account of the reception of this unfortunate band, and their treatment in England, deserves notice. "When the horrible excesses of our revolution," he says, "compelled us to take refuge in England, our emigration produced the liveliest sensation in that country; the arrival of so many illustrious exiles, their past fortunes and their actual forlorn condition, were impressed on every mind, and filled every heart. They became the subject of consideration in political assemblies, in places of divine worship, in fashionable circles, and in private families. That catastrophe agitated every class, and excited every sympathy. We were surrounded by a generous and feeling multitude. We were the objects of the most delicate attention and of the most substantial favours. Such, it must be acknowledged, was the affecting sight held out by a vast portion of English society, even in spite of the difference of opinions. It is a testimony due from our gratitude to the truth of history."

† In relating the events of this campaign, I have relied principally on Lacroix, tom. ix. p. 277, and tom. x. liv. 13; Thiers, tom. iii. p. 33, to 47, and p. 93 to 133; *Mémoires d'un Homme d'État*, tom. i. p. 341 to the end, and tom. ii. p. 1 to 16; *Mémoires du General Dumouriez*; and the histories and periodical works relating to the times in general.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTY-SEVENTH.

1791—1792--1793.

Transactions in Poland.—Views of the Empress of Russia.—Combines with Prussia.—Polish party go to Petersburg.—Preparations in Poland.—Declaration of the Diet.—Confederation of Targowitz.—Declaration of the Empress.—Conduct of Prussia.—Poland invaded.—Application to Prussia—answer.—Progress of the Russians.—Battles.—Pusillanimity of Stanislaus.—Attempts at negotiation.—Conduct of the Bishop of Lithuania.—The King writes to the Empress—her answer.—Council of State assembled.—Stanislaus signs the confederation.—Spirit of the people.—Constitution abolished—a generality convoked—its arbitrary proceedings.—Deputation to the Empress.—Conduct of the Emperor.—Manifesto of Prussia.—Tyranny exercised over the Assembly.—Second partition of Poland.—Fate of the Confederates of Targowitz.—Effect of these proceedings in relation to those of France.—Progress of the French armies.—Neutrality of Switzerland—Italy—Sardinia.—Invasion of Savoy.—Marquis de Montesquiou.—Capture of Chambery—Nice—Villa-franca.—Savoy and Nice united to France.—Attempt on Geneva.—Disgrace and escape of Montesquiou.—Progress of the French in Germany.—Capture of Spire and other towns—Mayence—Frankfort.—Decline of Custine's popularity.—Siege of Lille raised.—Dumouriez goes to Paris.—Plan for invading Flanders.—Austrian force there.—Battle of Jemappes.—Welcome reception of the French.—Battle of Tirlemont.—Liege and other towns taken.—Decree for opening the Scheldt and the Meuse.—Effect of these successes.—Flanders united to France.—Plunder.—Retreat of Clerfaye.—Dumouriez again in Paris.—Observations.—Proceedings of Societies in En-

gland.—Vigilance of Government.—Address to the National Convention.—Votes of the Constitutional Society.—Proceedings of the Friends of the People.—Conduct of Lord Sempill.—Publications—"Killing no Murder" reprinted—dedication.—Rights of Woman.—Barlow's Advice to the privileged Orders.—Rights of Man, part the second—cheap editions.—Paine's Letter to Mr. Dundas.—Criminal information against Paine—Trial—Verdict against him.—Resentment of the Societies.—Friends of the Freedom of the Press.—Association against republicans and levellers.—Riots and tumults.—Mount Street—Edinburgh—Dundee—King's Bench and Fleet prisons.—Debating Societies.—King's Arms tavern in Cornhill—discussions interrupted—society dispersed.—Conduct of Government.—Proclamations for embodying the militia—and convening Parliament. The Tower fortified.—Proceedings in the City of London—meeting of merchants—their declaration.—Tumult at Manchester.

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1791.
Proceedings
in Poland.

WHILE war was thus adverse to the cause of sovereigns, their moral influence was much impaired by an act of atrocious usurpation and interested spoliation, which enabled their opponents to represent them as enemies of liberty and independence, ready, on any pretext, or even without one, to invade, to dismember, and to destroy any nation whose territory they chanced to covet. The privileges of sovereigns, for which they affected to contend; the sanction of treaties, which they pretended to invoke; the very ordinary rights of human nature, to which all men feel, or affect, some reverence; were considered as nothing when the cupidity of monarchs longed for prey, and when strength and opportunity afforded means of satisfying their desires.

In framing the new constitution of Poland, it has already been observed, that the legislators consulted only the true interests of their own country; they appealed to no general principles, advanced no extravagant or dangerous dogmas, professed no desires or de-

signs tending to alter the political condition of other states, or to weaken the ties by which the people were attached to their rulers, or to afford themes to declaimers against the authority of sovereigns, or the just veneration due to the ministers of religion, or the privileged classes either in their own or any other country. Fortunate had it been for Poland, if the new constitution had been established two years earlier* than it was. In 1789, Russia was engaged in war with Turkey and Sweden, at variance with Prussia, doubtful of England, and not altogether supported by the Emperor in her politics. The views of Catherine were, however, unaltered, her perseverance unremitted. At the time when the new constitution was formed, her situation, with respect to Turkey and England, permitted no more; but she expressed displeasure at the event. Her party (and wretched is the condition of that country which has in its legislature men avowedly the partisans of a foreign power)—her party in the diet obstructed, as far as they could, the formation of the new constitution, and in long and vehement orations decried it, not merely as monarchical, but absolutely despotic. The people, uninfluenced by these cavils, received it as a blessing, and, while it was permitted to subsist, clung to it with warm affection, as the cause of their present happiness, and the foundation of their future hope.

When the discontinuance of the British armament, and the peace of Jassi, left the Empress free from external pressures, her views on Poland were more distinctly announced. Affecting to be the soul of the combination against France, she effectually conciliated Frederick William, and attached to herself the unfortunate Gustavus, by promising him the command of the allied forces. She had issued a proclamation to her own subjects against French principles, with the insidious addition, that they would soon ruin Poland; thus substituting for the complaint that the new constitution was too monarchical, a censure of it as Jaco-

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1791.

Views of the
Empress of
Russia

Combines with
Prussia.

1792.
Jan. 21.

* For a judicious and succinct account of the ancient and the improved condition of this country, see Alison, vol. ii. c. 16.

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1792.

Polish party
go to Peters-
burgh.Preparations
in Poland.April 16.
Declaration of
the Diet.General
exertions.

binical; and by that description it was afterward held up to indignation. A minute faction, composed originally of about ten devoted adherents of Russia, unsupported and not avowed by their own countrymen, repaired to Petersburg, and were graciously received by the Empress; but the people, attached as they were to the person and authority of their sovereign, taught these renegades, by their hisses and demonstrations of contempt when they returned, how those subjects of any country must be despised and abhorred who go to solicit the hostile intervention of a foreign power against the government and integrity of their native land.

Justly apprehensive of approaching danger, the King made preparations for defence; the plan of a campaign was arranged, and Prince Joseph Poniatowski, with Generals Wielhorski and Kosciusko, took a position, with an army of observation, on the Ukraine, where the principal attack was expected. When the Diet assembled, Stanislaus addressed them in a suitable speech, and they published a declaration, denying any hostile views against their neighbours, but stating their resolution to maintain the jurisdiction, liberty, and independence of their own civil constitution. The King and the nation, in cordial union on this point, strained every effort to assure success. The army was to be completed to one hundred thousand effective men, and augmented by light troops from the Tartars and Cossacks; the nobles consigned their domestic bands to the service of the state, and citizens and burghers were required to arm for protection of their towns. Pecuniary sacrifices were freely made, the King himself setting the generous example; voluntary donations of money, plate, and jewels, were offered by the great officers of state and by individuals, and it was decreed that the estates of subjects joining a foreign enemy should be forfeited during their lives. Never was a public feeling more generally, more spontaneously, expressed, more rapidly communicated to a whole people.

In the mean time, the traitors to their country exe-

cuted a document, which they called the Confederation of Targowitz, while it is not certain that any one of the nine whose names are affixed was at the town; and it is certain that two of them, at the least, were at Saint Petersburg, where the paper is believed to have been concocted*.

Armed with this feeble and deceptive instrument, Catherine issued a declaration that, in joining the Confederation of Targowitz, she was influenced by no motive but that of strictly maintaining her treaties with Poland. It fills the mind with disgust to observe how often the words of sovereigns, which ought to be the most sacred of human obligations, are uttered only to deceive, and with a complete knowledge of their falsehood. At the time she issued this state paper, Catherine had concluded a treaty with the King of Prussia, defining the terms, the bounds, and all other particulars of a spoliation of the Polish territory, contrary to the faith of all treaties, and in violation of every just and honourable principle. Catherine put forth this declaration to justify in the eyes of God and man the measures she felt obliged to take. This paper is ably and faithfully described in a periodical work of the highest character:—"The pretended grounds of hostility set forth by the Empress were some of them false, others frivolous, many of an old date, and, the greater part, such as no state has a right to urge against another in the enjoyment of acknowledged independence. All the proceedings of the Diet, from the original act of confederation down to the establishment of the new constitution, were misrepresented and charged with illegality, usurpation, and violence. Every thing done or said, offensive to Russia, was enumerated; the orders for the evacuation of the country by her troops in 1789; the condemnation of some of her subjects for a treasonable conspiracy about the same period; the arrest of the Abbot of Sluck, and the violation of the chapel in the suburbs of Warsaw; the freedom of speech in the Diet; and, above all, the negotiations at Con-

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1792.
May 14.
Confederation
of Targowitz.

18th.
Declaration of
the Empress.

* Histoire des trois Démembrements, t. iii. p. 185.

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1792.

“stantinople. But all these Catherine professed to
 “pardon, in her equity, and generosity to the Polish
 “nation. She could not, however, be deaf, she said,
 “to the claims of those patriots who had demanded
 “the performance of her guarantee, and her support
 “of a confederation in which they had united, for the
 “restoration of law and liberty to the republic, de-
 “prived of both by the pretended constitution. Her
 “troops came only as friends to co-operate in this good
 “purpose*.”

Conduct of
Prussia.

Frederick William, whose honourable character might have been expected to elevate him above participation in such a transaction, accorded slowly in the views of Catherine. His virtue was not proof against his covetousness to possess Thorn and Dantzick, especially when the acquisition of other territory was added to the allurements. But, in adopting the resolution to co-operate with the Empress, the King of Prussia had to contend against more than ordinary circumstances, and to give a specimen of bad faith rarely exhibited by a sovereign. Catherine had always been openly opposed to the new constitution of Poland, and her hostility, although perfidiously conducted, could not be unexpected. Frederick William, on the contrary, had professed unqualified approbation. His minister at Warsaw, Count Goltz, communicated to the King of Poland the declaration of his great satisfaction in learning the happy revolution which, at length, had given to Poland a wise and regular constitution. He declared also his entire approbation of the Elector of Saxony, a virtuous prince, destined to form the happiness of Poland, as the successor to the throne, and offered his sincere congratulations to the King, the Marshals of the Diet, and all those who had contributed to the great work. In a letter to Stanislaus Augustus himself, dated a week afterward, amidst expressions of warm personal attachment, he said, “I am happy to have been able to contribute to the
 “support of the liberty and independence of Poland,

1791.
May 16.

23rd.

* Annual Register, 1792, p. 63. And the document at length is in the same publication. State Papers, p. 361.

“and one of my most pleasing cares shall be to maintain and strengthen the ties which unite us*.”

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Had Russia still been embarrassed by a war, or had the influence of England to restrain her ambition not been counteracted, the woes of Poland might probably have been averted; but now, feeling herself free from all fear, and deterred by no principle, the Empress precipitately displayed the arbitrary violence of uncontrolled power. Without proposing any terms, without waiting for any explanation, on the very day, it is said, that her minister, Bulgakow, delivered her manifesto to the Diet, her troops passed the Polish frontier.

1792.

Poland
invaded.

Stanislaus, not knowing that he was leaning on a reed which would break and pierce him, wrote to the King of Prussia, stating the menaces and aggressions of the Empress, and claiming the aid which, in pursuance of a treaty, he had a right to expect. This treaty† had formed one of the causes of displeasure entertained by Catherine against the King of Poland. Its sixth article was, “If any foreign power, by virtue of any preceding act or stipulation, or any interpretation of them, shall assume the right of interfering in the internal affairs of Poland, or its dependencies; the King of Prussia will first employ his most efficacious good offices to prevent hostilities; but should they fail of effect, his Majesty, considering this as a case falling within the meaning of the alliance, will assist the republic according to the tenor of the fourth article of the present treaty;” and that article covenanted for an aid of thirty thousand men. The answer was evasive and dishonourable. The King averred that the constitution had been formed without his privity or concurrence; that he had never thought of upholding or protecting it. Whatever friendship he might have sworn to Stanislaus, and whatever interest he might take in every thing that concerned him, yet, the state of affairs since the alliance was contracted being entirely changed, and the present con-

1792.

May 31.
Application to
Prussia.

Answer,
June 8th.

* The substance of these letters will be found in *Histoire des trois Démembrements*, t. iii. pp. 121, 123: and in an anonymous *History of Poland*, one vol. oct. published by Vernon and Hood, 1795, pp. 390, 391.

† Dated the 29th March, 1790.

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juncture, brought on by the new constitution posterior to the treaty, not being applicable to the engagements it contained, it did not belong to him to resist the attack of Russia, unless the patriots of Poland would retrace their steps; then he would be ready to concert measures with the Empress, to explain himself with the court of Vienna, to aim at reconciling the different interests, and restoring to Poland its tranquillity. It is difficult to conceive that such a paper as this could be signed by the hand which, only thirteen months before, had written to Count Goltz sentiments highly friendly to Stanislaus, and laudatory of the constitution and its provisions.

Progress of the
Russians.

Russian troops inundated the frontiers of Poland, from Riga to Kamienieck; they had penetrated into the Polish Ukraine. Three columns, amounting to seventy thousand men, marched toward Batta, Mohilow, and Kiow; while another army of twenty thousand proceeded to attack Lithuania. Against this force, Poland was able to oppose, garrisons and depôts included, sixty thousand men already in arms, and the Diet and the Constitution had entrusted the King with means of doubling, or even of further augmenting, the number. Prince Poniatowski, the commander-in-chief, divided his troops into three bodies; the command of one he reserved to himself, confiding the other two to Kosciusko, who had fought under Washington in America, and Wielhorski. Several well-contested engagements took place, particularly one at Mokronowski, in which the Russians were defeated, and only saved from a total capture by the mistake of a Polish general who did not arrive in time with a reserve; and another at Dubienka, in which the advantage was on the side of Poland.

Battles of
Mokronowski,

June.

and Dubienka.

Pusillanimity
of Stanislaus.

But, although they behaved with valour and steadiness on every occasion, the Poles had, in fact, no prospect of success: they might have resisted the invading enemy in the field; but treachery in one at least of their commanders, the feebleness of the ministry, who knew not how to direct their operations and supplies, and, above all, the vacillating character of their sovereign,

destroyed their hopes and rendered their energy useless. The spirit of Stanislaus seemed to be subjugated by that of Catherine: against her he could not act with vigour; but he always appeared to look helplessly toward her, as the guide of his conduct and the ruler of his fate. Under this impulse it must have been that he remained within the walls of Warsaw, always professing an intention, which he never executed, to join his army in person, but, in fact, crippling their efforts, and calling them from fields where they were signalizing their valour, and would probably have driven the enemy beyond the frontier, to defend, what was not yet menaced, the passage of the River Bug.

Both Russia and Prussia had ministers resident in Warsaw; and Stanislaus, relying on his supposed talents as a negotiator, flattered himself that, by conferring with each of them separately, he should effect some beneficial arrangement. Hoping to surmount an objection which Catherine had expressed against the establishment of the House of Saxony on the Polish throne, he offered to substitute her second grandson, Constantine; but the cautious Empress, foreseeing that such a measure would unite Austria and Prussia against her, declined the proposal, and imperiously directed him to accede to the confederation of Targowitz, as the only means of preserving the integrity of Poland; "on this condition alone," she said, "he may flatter himself that I will again style myself his sister and friendly neighbour." Instead of displaying the indignation which ought to have inflamed a royal breast, the King seems only to have sought for contrivances by which, without incurring too much shame, he might yield to this imperious behest. The confederates of Targowitz, small in number and explicitly renounced by the majority of the nation, could give him no reasonable cause of uneasiness; but, relying on the assistance of Russia, they affected an insolent tone of domination over him.

Secure of such support, they proceeded to gain the accession of Lithuania to their views. The bishop, Kossakowski, commanded an assembly of the nobility

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1792.

Attempts at
negotiation.

June.
Conduct of
the Bishop of
Lithuania.

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1792.

and of the
King.

22nd.
Writes to the
Empress.

July 2.
Her answer.

Stanislaus
assembles a
council of
state.

of that province, which, in the absence of many of them, about forty persons, mostly managers or stewards of estates, were convened. To them was presented a blank paper to be signed; one who refused, unless he might be permitted to know to what his name was to be affixed, was sent to prison and detained many days. The rest complied; and the decree which was framed on this assent was not less tyrannical than the means by which it was obtained were atrocious. Simeon Kossakowski, the bishop's brother, although a general in the Russian service, was appointed to command the troops in Lithuania, and all other offices of trust were distributed among the relatives of the same family. Felix Potocki, one of the confederates, endeavoured, by manifestoes, to persuade his betrayed countrymen that Catherine was their true and only friend, that all her views were limited to the restoration of their ancient republican liberty. Had Stanislaus been worthy of the people he was called upon to rule, his country would have risen gloriously above this attempt; but he, basely crouching before the oppressor, wrote to her in abject terms, renewing his proposal to make Constantine his successor, imploring an armistice, throwing himself and his country upon her compassion, and promising his influence to induce the Diet to comply with her wishes. To this masterpiece of meanness, an answer of commensurate haughtiness was returned. The Empress rigidly declared that the ancient liberty of the republic and form of government should be restored. The most sound portion of the nation had confederated to assert those rights, and having promised them her effective support, she flattered herself that the King, without waiting for the last extremity, would accede to the confederation formed under her auspices*.

This letter probably afforded to Stanislaus what he anxiously desired, a pretext for yielding to demands which he wanted vigour to resist. To diminish the weight of disgrace on himself, he called, on the very

* These two letters are in the *Histoire des trois Dëmembrements*, t. iii, p. 233.

day he received it, a council of state. Thirteen persons assembled; a temporary silence, which was produced by consternation, was seized on by the King as a testimony of unanimous acquiescence; but, after a vehement and passionate debate, seven only declared in favour, and six against, the King's proposition. One was deemed a sufficient majority; Stanislaus signed the confederation, and pledged himself for the assent of the army.

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LXXVII.

1792.

23rd.
Signs the
confederation.

To the stupor which this intelligence at first occasioned, a burst of indignation succeeded. The people could not imagine that the King should declare himself the enemy of that constitution of which he took pride in considering himself the author; which he had sworn to, with the approbation of his own, and the congratulation of foreign countries. The army, elated by recent successes, were anxious to bring the Russians to a general engagement, and were manœuvring for that purpose, when the brave and faithful Poniatowski was obliged to announce the fatal intelligence which abolished their cause and doomed them to be mere assistants of Russia. Many soldiers broke or threw away the arms which they were ordered so to employ; a total and bloody defeat could not have caused a more afflictive display, and the people exhibited corresponding emotions. The two marshals and several deputies to the Diet, who were in Warsaw, solemnly engaged to be firm and patient, neither abandoning their country, nor heading a civil war, but rely on time and the nation for their justification. The two marshals of the Diet, Stanislaus Malackowski and Casimir Sapiéha, by a strong protest, recorded their condemnation of the confederates of Targowitz, and declared also that the acts of the King, not having been sanctioned by the Diet of Warsaw, were null and void.

Spirit of the
people.

25th and 26th.

The destroyers of their country's independence used the authority which they had thus basely acquired as might have been expected. Their avowed intention was to re-establish the old system, which the constitution had annulled; but the people were too much

Constitution
abolished.

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1792.

pleased with a revolution pregnant with so much general good, and obtained without crime or bloodshed, to surrender it without strong expressions of repugnance. The King completed his own disgrace, by issuing, at the command of these oppressors, a proclamation, wherein he denounced the proceedings of his own Diet, as acts of despotism; styled the confederation of Targowitz the salvation of Poland, and the magnanimous Catherine the supporter of the country's liberty. All the acts of oppression and outrage to which Stanislaus had previously shown his opposition, were now recognised as lawful, renewed, and extended. Violent measures were taken for compelling individuals to declare their assent to the new order of things. The government repealed the war tax, alleging that they had no enemy; obliged all the receivers of the revenue to bind themselves by oath to pay over their funds only to such treasuries as should be appointed; and fearing the spirit and opinions which prevailed in the army, separated it into small divisions, every one of which was sent to act amidst an overpowering Russian force. To increase the insolence of the proceeding, but, at the same time, creating a danger of which they were not aware, they disbanded a great many of the military in a harsh and insolent manner, refusing even to pay up their arrears. As a means of completing the effects of their violence and terror, an assembly was convoked, called a Generality, the members of which were selected by the confederates. Those whom they first named were men who caused no unfavourable impression on the country; but they shrunk with horror from the appointment, and the nomination then fell on the most abject characters. They abolished all the decrees of the Diet; deprived the burghers of the valued rights restored to them by the constitution; deprived the war department of all authority; dismissed all public functionaries appointed by the Diet, suspended the recognised courts, and appointed a new one, on the French republican model, called the Tribunal of the Confederations; and they forbad, under severe penalties, all animadversions

A Generality
convoked.

Its arbitrary
proceedings.

of the press on their conduct or decrees. They issued summonses against Malackowski, Potocki, and Kollontay, intending to try them before the new tribunal, which had general instructions to act up to the sense of the revolution; but the general and strong expression of feeling against this outrage made the oppressors shrink from their own attempt, and the parties were left at liberty. The union established between the Polish and Lithuanian people was repealed, and all the revenues of Lithuania appropriated to the confederates. Having thus destroyed, in a few days, all that the Diet, to the general satisfaction of the nation, had been three years in establishing, they sent a deputation of fifteen to Catherine, vaunting their own patriotism and love of liberty, and thanking her for the protection she had afforded. In her answer she assured them of her determination to maintain entire the possessions of the republic.

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1792.

Deputation to
Russia.

Situation of
the Empress.

Subsequent events would almost reduce this answer to irony or burlesque; but the deputation arrived at a time when the Empress could not avow, or openly pursue, her designs of dismemberment: it was at the period when the Emperor and the King of Prussia were engaged in the campaign in France, and when the arrangements she desired could not be combined. The Emperor was averse to the project of spoliation; but a threat that the King of Prussia would separate himself from the alliance, brought him to acquiesce; and a jealousy of the aggrandisement of the two other powers made him, at last, a participator with them. If the Polish mission could be imposed upon by the vague and pompous promise of Catherine, the conduct of her troops in Poland, where they exercised rapacious exactions and unbounded barbarities, were sufficient to undeceive them, especially when remonstrances of the Generality against such proceedings were treated by the Russian ministers with contempt. Yet they believed, or affected to believe, and they declared in a manifesto, that, so soon as the ancient constitution should be re-established, the Russian troops would retire, the liberty and independence of the republic

Conduct of the
Emperor.

December 17.

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1792.

Manifesto of
Prussia.

1793.

January 16th.

be assured, and the nation would be grateful to those who had exposed their fortunes and their lives, and incurred every calumny, to secure their happiness.

In less than a month after his inglorious retreat from France, the King of Prussia published a manifesto, inveighing against the party which resisted, instead of acceding to, the salutary views of the Empress; complaining of the principles of French Jacobinism, which were prevailing in Poland, and rapidly promulgated in the neighbouring states by means of revolutionary clubs. He had, therefore, in concert with the courts of Vienna and Petersburg, ordered a body of his troops to enter certain districts of Great Poland, merely as a measure of precaution; and he trusted that the people would merit this protection, by prudent and peaceable conduct, by treating his troops in a friendly manner, and supplying all their wants*.

Russia com-
bines with
Prussia.

This insolent state paper was the prelude to acts of conformable injustice, and the precedent for many other manifestoes and messages, both of Prussia and Russia. The Generality implored the intervention of the Empress; but they soon found that she also, notwithstanding her repeated declarations, confirmed by treaties, intended to seize a large portion of the lands of the republic. Some months passed in fruitless discussions; the demands of the dismembering powers were pressed with unintermitting perseverance and increasing insolence, enforced by menaces of confiscation of private, and appropriation of public, property; so that the army, no longer paid, must live on the inhabitants of the country†.

July 5th.
Tyranny exer-
cised over the
Assembly.

The Polish nation, disarmed and prostrate, could only oppose reasonings, intreaties, and, at last, a sullen negative resistance to the requisition that a treaty should be signed on the terms required. To conquer this last obstacle, four nuncios were arrested by the Russian general, and the place of sitting was surrounded by his troops. This violent measure, which

August 24th.

* *Trois Demembrements*, tome iii. livre 12. *Pièces Justificatives*, No. 2, p. 332.

† Same, *Pièce* 20, p. 372.

he hoped would accelerate the determination of the Diet, in fact prevented it; for they declared that, by law, all their deliberations were suspended when they were assailed by violence. The Russian commander, Sievers, acknowledged that the four nuncios had been carried off by his orders, and his charge was, that one of them had openly extolled Jacobinical principles and those of the revolutionary Diet, and the constitution of the third of May. He answered their objection to deliberating, while under the control of force, by treating it as a new proof of Jacobinism—a want of respect to crowned heads. Rautenfeld, a Russian general who attended the sitting, declared that no one should leave the hall until they sanctioned the treaties required; and even threatened personal violence. The nuncios remained unmoved until three o'clock in the morning, when it was contrived that Biolinsky, the marshal of the Diet, should, by proclamation, demand whether or not they consented that a deputation should sign the treaties. The proclamation being three times repeated, and none of the nuncios uttering a word, the silence was construed into assent; and the marshal declared, that as no opposition was made, the signature was authorised; and, notwithstanding some protests, they were executed.

By the treaties thus extorted, Prussia acquired the city of Ozenstokow in Little Poland, with Thorn and Dantzick, and she extended her frontiers to the left banks of the rivers Pilica and Skiernewka, otherwise called Jezowka and Bichowka. Russia drew a line for her boundary, which gave her half of Lithuania, the palatinate of Podolia, Polock, Minsk, a portion of Wilna, and half of Novogrodetsk, Brzese, and Volhinia. Both treaties contained guarantees on the part of the plundering powers to preserve to Poland her remaining territory; an assurance which might justly be considered ironical, and a sure presage of a final partition.

While these affairs were in agitation, the confederates of Targowitz became sensible of the ruin, which, for the gratification of their ambition, they had brought

20th.
Partition of
Poland.

Fate of the
confederates
of Targowitz.

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July 11.

Effect of these
proceedings.

on their country. They remonstrated against some of the claims of the two sovereigns; and the Diet and the King mentioned the confederation as the basis of some of their proceedings; but Catherine declared that she would not so much as hear of a paper in which the confederation of Targowitz was mentioned*. The members then sought a retreat to their own estates, or into foreign lands, pursued by the execrations of their own countrymen, and overwhelmed by the contempt of all men, and, not least, of those for whom they had done so much and so wickedly.

If the ill success of the allies in the field was injurious to their political and territorial interest, their moral influence over the minds of men was much more impaired by these transactions. To every charge which the republicans made against them, these events gave colour and support, while they diminished the effect of all assertions that could be advanced as criminations against the Jacobin leaders. The partition of Poland was plausibly and with probability, referred to as a proof that a similar fate was destined for France, had the arms of the invaders prevailed: proclamations, declaring that no such intentions existed, were answered by reference to those which had been issued respecting Poland, when the dismemberment had been sternly resolved on, and was inexorably pursued. The charges of Jacobinism against the French government were treated as mere senseless abuse, as the use of a word without any defined application of its sense, when it embraced not only the revolutionary violences which appalled all mankind, but could be extended to a constitution which established hereditary monarchy, confirmed the just authority of the church, although it did not permit persecution; which took from the nobles neither rank nor property, nor, in fact, any thing which they had not spontaneously surrendered; and conferred on cities and their inhabitants, not speculative, illusory, or destructive abstract rights, but solid, evident, important advantages, founded on positive

* Note of General Sievers to the Diet.—Trois Démembrements, tome iii. p. 370.

law, and subject to no misconstruction. To overthrow such a constitution,—voluntarily framed and sworn to by the King, nobles, priests, and people,—two powerful monarchs, with the concurrence of a third, had taken up arms, and by the mixed operation of treacherous intrigue and military force, had inflicted on a nation the privation of its most valuable territories, without a pretext of aggression, but merely for having dared to give themselves a constitution*.

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Such were the encouragements afforded to the republicans by the example and conduct of crowned monarchs, while the confidence of the rulers of France was confirmed, and the diffusion of their doctrines facilitated by the continued success of their arms. In a moment, as if by magic, their military position was entirely changed. They had been invaded, their armies undisciplined and defeated, their political existence menaced, and the partition of their country apprehended: they were become invaders on all points, they threatened those so lately the objects of their alarm, added to their own territory the conquests they achieved, and, aided by intrigues and the proselytes gained to their principles, even more than by their victorious progress, they expected to extend the boundary of the French dominions to the Rhine, and to strengthen their sway by the overthrow of thrones and the establishment of republics. Neighbouring nations appeared stupified with astonishment; incapable alike of attacking the formidable enemy, or of taking vigorous measures for their own defence.

In vain had the cry of vengeance for their countrymen murdered on the 10th of August been raised in Switzerland; jealousies among the states and the slowness of the Diet prevented unanimous resolution or vigorous exertion, and bound the country to a neutrality in all respects most favourable to France.

Neutrality of
Switzerland.

* In this afflicting narrative, which is much compressed, besides Rivington's Annual Register for 1792, p. 62, 383, and other periodical works, I have principally followed Histoire de trois Démembrements de la Pologne, tom. iii. l. 10, 11, 12, with the Pièces justificatives; Ségur, Histoire de Frédéric Guillaume II. tom. iii. p. 132 to 155; Castéra, Histoire de Catherine II. tom. iii. p. 113; Anonymous History of Poland, p. 398.

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Italy.
Sardinia.

The states of Italy were too much divided, too weak and too timid, to be united by a feeling of common danger; but the King of Sardinia appeared to be inspired with a sense of the injuries sustained by his near relatives, the Royal Family of France; he nobly protected the emigrant princes, and his military preparations, pompously announced in gazettes, gave offence, but not alarm, to the predominating party: it was known that, far from being formidable in invasion, they were insufficient even for defence.

Invasion of
Savoy.Marquis de
Montesquiou.

September 23.

Capture of
Chambery.
28th.
Nice and
Villa Franca.Savoy and
Nice united
to France.

Against this sovereign the vengeance of the republic was speedily directed: emissaries had been employed to prepare the people of Savoy for the reception of republican notions; and an army, commanded by the Marquis de Montesquiou, was put in motion to invade his dominions. This commander was a nobleman of the highest extraction; a circumstance which would have made the trust reposed in him more wonderful, but that his constant revolutionary efforts, his services at Avignon, and his vindication of the massacres, and of Jourdan, gained him the confidence of the ruling party; but his subsequent inertness so little justified their predilection, that the Jacobins in the Convention obtained a decree for suspending him. Just at this time he had commenced operations with surprising success. The Piedmontese, hitherto reckoned good soldiers, appeared struck with an unaccountable panic; although protected by mountains deemed almost inaccessible, and by fortresses considered unassailable, they fled on every side, leaving their artillery and magazines in the power of the victor, who, in three days, entered Chambery, amid popular acclamations. Nice and Villa Franca were captured with equal facility by General Anselme; who thus obtained more than a hundred pieces of artillery, five thousand muskets, a large quantity of ammunition, provisions, and military stores; besides a frigate and a corvette in the harbour, and all the effects in the naval arsenal. The Convention decreed that Savoy and Nice should be united to the republic, under the names of the department of Mont Blanc and the

Maritime Alps; assigning as a reason, that nature pointed out the union of countries, which were already connected by physical and moral ties. The decree for superseding Montesquiou was repealed; but commissioners were sent to his army.

From Savoy, the natural progress would have been to Italy; but the rulers of France bent their views to the conquest of the little republic of Geneva, with which they had been in angry discussion, or rather seeking and feigning causes of quarrel. Montesquiou regarded with grief the expedition on which he was ordered. Instead of using his power to enrich himself and his troops, he made delays, entered into negotiations, and obtained the submission of the state by pacific means. This proceeding was not disagreeable to all the French ministers; but Clavière, himself a native of Geneva, and who had been driven from it during some political conflict, was outrageous at seeing his hope of vengeance disappointed, and fomented enmities against the General. Barrère denounced him, for having compromised the dignity of the French republic by his treaty; and a decree of accusation was pronounced. He had the good fortune to escape into Switzerland, where he found shelter until better days returned*.

In Germany, the successes obtained by General Custine were of far greater importance. To cover the Palatinate, the King of Prussia had left only a few Hessians, not exceeding three thousand, under an officer of no higher rank than a colonel. At the head of fifteen thousand men, detached from the army of the Rhine, Custine put this small body to flight, and took the town of Spire, with a large store of provision and ammunition. Worms and Oppenheim opened their gates; Mayence was well fortified, although but slenderly provisioned, the garrison was six thousand,

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October 7.

Attempt on
Geneva.

November 8.

Disgrace and
escape of
Montesquiou

10th.

Progress in
Germany.

September 30

October 5.
Capture of
Spire and
other towns.

* In the military part of this narrative, I have followed Lacrételle, t. x. c. 14; Victoires, Conquêtes, &c. des François, t. i. p. 38. In what relates personally to Montesquiou, I have been assisted by a work called Dictionnaire biographique et historique des Hommes marquans, article Montesquiou. To finish with this General, he was recalled into France on the 3rd of September, 1795, and died the 30th December, 1798.

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Mayence
surrendered.
21st.Frankfort
taken.27th.
Decline of
Custine's po-
pularity.

Siege of Lille.

and a defence might have been made, but the commandant surrendered almost at the first summons. His conduct did not proceed from cowardice or treachery; but the inhabitants, and particularly the students in the university, were imbued with French principles; they maintained communications with the enemy, and strongly urged the surrender.

A well-concerted operation of the combined French armies would at this time have had a tremendous effect; but each general pursued some favourite plan of his own, and each was jealous of adding to the military fame and influence of the other. Custine directed his views toward Frankfort on the Main, a rich, free, open, commercial town, easy to take, but difficult and useless to retain. Allured by the prospect of booty, Custine entered it, and gratified his rapacity by levying large contributions; but, affecting to follow up the spirit of his proclamations, to make war with palaces and peace with cottages, he confined his exactions to the superior classes: many of them fled, to preserve their wealth; the soldiers gave themselves up to licentiousness and plunder; the General, endeavouring to restrain their excesses, lost their affection and their confidence; and at this point his renown and influence may be said to have terminated. His progress is memorable on two accounts. He disseminated, in their utmost extent, and in all their wildness and fury, the principles of liberty and equality; and, not content with the usual boastful tone and manner of other commanders, introduced into his proclamations that style of contemptuous abuse against his opponents which distinguished the French publications for many succeeding years*.

Lille had been unskilfully besieged by Prince Albert, Duke of Saxe-Teschen, at the head of eighteen thousand men; and, although, for eighteen days, a continual bombardment had been kept up, unavailing indeed with respect to the fortifications, but horribly

* For example, he apostrophised the Landgrave of Hesse in these terms:—
“A monster on whose head long have been accumulated, like a black cloud,
“forerunner of a storm, the curses of Germans, the tears and cries of orphans.—
“Thine own long-abused soldiers are about to deliver thee over to the just ven-
“geance of the French. Thou canst not escape by flight! What nation would
“afford an asylum to such a tiger as thou art!”

destructive of private property and unoffending life, the high spirit and gallantry of the inhabitants prevented all thoughts of capitulation ; and the siege was at length no less ingloriously raised, than it had been disgracefully conducted. It was asserted that the Archduchess Christina, sister of the Queen of France, who had followed the allies into France, in the hope of conveying comfort to her oppressed relative, had, with her own hand, fired mortars to throw bombs into the town, and viewed with cruel gaiety the progress of conflagration. In all this there was no truth ; but it served to fill columns of journals, and to furnish pretences for calling her a fury and a tigress, whose hatred of France was inspired by her captive sister*.

These successes were of small importance, compared with those which attended the arms of Dumouriez. After the retreat of the invaders, he repaired to Paris, to concert measures and obtain reinforcements for the invasion of Flanders. Although his permission extended only to four days, his enemies asserted that he came only to be gratified with shews of triumph and strains of adulation. If such were his views, of which there was no probability, he was miserably disappointed. Wherever he went, he was compelled to perceive that the rigour of the system of equality did not allow much distinction between him and the humblest of his followers. No political party courted his aid or countenance ; his late colleagues, Roland and Clavière, now declining in popularity, seemed to forget old grievances, and to hail him with unabated friendship : through their means, he was received in a gracious, but not flattering, manner by the Convention. The low and malicious Jacobins already began their venomous attacks, and, in their papers, reproached him with anti-republican feelings, and censured him for permitting the unimpeded escape of the Prussian army. While he remained to transact his important business, he was obliged to visit the Jacobin club,

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1792.
Oct. 8th.
Raised.

Dumouriez
goes to Paris.

Oct. 11.

His treatment.

* Lacrételle, tomes x. and xiv. Thiers, tomes iii. and iv. Mémoires d'un Homme d'État, tome ii. p. 37, et seqq. Victoires, Conquêtes, &c. des Français, tome i. p. 47.

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Plan for invading Flanders.

where he underwent a burlesque exhortation from Collet d'Herbois; and, even in a private society, he was exposed to the insolent intrusion and insulting interrogation of the incendiary Marat.

In pursuance of a plan arranged under the auspices of Dumouriez, the military measures already mentioned were taken, and he was to attack Flanders, a country particularly pointed out by his ambition and his policy, and in which, as he expressed it, the army could only be protected by gaining battles. By his influence with Santerre, he obtained an order for discontinuing the absurd project of forming a camp of twenty thousand men around Paris, and for transferring all the troops, artillery, ammunition, and camp equipage, into the Low Countries. The new forces which he thus acquired, and which made his army amount to nearly one hundred thousand, were composed of young men, low in stature and slim of form, but lively, cheerful, alert, active, and full of military ardour. To give them instruction was difficult; to subject them to discipline, impossible. The genius of Dumouriez was alone capable of managing these tempestuous elements to any effectual purpose; he availed himself of their ardour; and, without affecting to restrain them by severe rules, or to govern their motions on principles recognized in the art of war, he raised their courage to such a pitch, that, animated by their favourite songs, the Marseillois and the Carmagnole, difficulty seemed only to increase their determination, and danger was divested of all its terror.

Austrian force in Flanders.

General Clerfaye had separated from the Duke of Brunswick. The Duke of Saxe-Teschen commanded the troops who were to cover the Austrian frontier. He was cold, irresolute, and embarrassed, damping the ardour of his men by doubts and precautions. General Beaulieu, the next in command, was in all respects a much better officer; but all his efforts could not conquer the coldness of the Duke, who persisted in fortifying Jemappes, to protect the town of Mons. Anxious to make an impression before the arrival of Clerfaye, Dumouriez determined to assail this post.

During several days, he engaged in skirmishes, in which he made nine hundred prisoners, with a loss of about five hundred. Beaulieu, alarmed at these active operations, proposed to assail the enemy in the night, which would have deprived them of the great advantage of their artillery; but the Duke would not consent, and, confiding in the strength of his position, awaited the attack. His army amounted to about twenty-two thousand men, with one hundred pieces of artillery. The French had an equal number of guns; but they were not advantageously situated. At seven o'clock in the morning, a cannonade began on both sides; but Dumouriez soon found that he could derive from it no benefit, except that of convincing his soldiers that they must place their reliance on the bayonet. With this formidable arm, and by the daring impetuosity of the young soldiery, the defences were successively carried. Bournonville, whom they called the French Ajax, greatly distinguished himself; the eldest son of the Duke of Orléans, called, after his father, Egalité junior, shewed much bravery and judgment in rallying a body of troops which was shaken in the conflict; and Baptiste, the valet-de-chambre of Dumouriez, was distinguished by his valour and conduct. This combat gave an example, which was generally followed in the course of the war, and to which the French owed much of their success, of substituting active force and impetuous audacity for the regular system of ancient tactics. In the essay, the expenditure of human life was awful; the Austrians having suffered a loss not exceeding a thousand men, while that of the French amounted to four or five times the number: but on the other hand is to be considered the unperceived waste of life and health in protracted operations, beside the loss of time and abatement of military ardour to which they inevitably conduce. In this battle, Dumouriez may be considered as the founder of the military glory of the French during their revolutionary wars: he avowed his principle, and its danger, when he said, "I can go great lengths with my Carmagnoles" (such was the nick-name given to the young

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3, 4, 5, Nov.
Battle of Je-
mappes.

6th.

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Conquest of
Flanders.

13th to 30th.

Welcome re-
ception of the
French.Opening of the
Scheldt and
Meuse.

levies); “but I do not husband them, and I shall
“want a great many recruits.”

The conquest of Flanders was the immediate result of the battle of Jemappes. Tournay, Menin, Courtray, and Ypres, on the one side, were evacuated by the Austrians, and taken by Dumouriez; while, on the other, Antwerp, Bruges, Ghent and Malines, received the troops headed by Labourdonnaye; and Dumouriez entered Brussels in triumph.

Clerfaye had brought to the Austrian army a reinforcement of about fifteen thousand men; but nothing could restore their spirit, which was additionally repressed by the hostile feeling of the country. The followers of Clerfaye were the men who had been active in suppressing the insurrection in Brabant: the people hated, the clergy execrated them; and, although they would rather have derived their deliverance from other hands, the priests received the victors at Brussels with the ringing of church bells, and chants of *Te Deum*.

To forward the progress of their arms, but in open defiance of the laws of nations and in contempt of treaties, the French executive government decreed that their General-in-chief, commanding in Belgium, should take the most efficacious measures, and use all the means at his disposal, to assure the freedom of navigation and carriage throughout the whole course of the rivers Scheldt and Meuse. This undisguised violation of the rights and compacts of neutral nations was rendered additionally galling by the terms of the decree, which assigned, as its causes, that the impediments and obstructions hitherto imposed on the navigation of those rivers were contrary to the fundamental principles of those natural rights which all Frenchmen had sworn to maintain, and that the course of rivers being the common and inalienable property of all countries watered by them, no nation could, without injustice, pretend to the exclusive occupation of the stream of a river, or to hinder the inhabitants of neighbouring territories, higher up their course, from the enjoyment of equal advantages. Such a claim of right was a relic

of feudal servitude, or, at best, an odious monopoly, which could only be maintained by force, or yielded to by weakness; consequently, such concessions were revocable at any time, and in despite of all treaties; for nature no more acknowledged privileged communities than privileged individuals, and the rights of man were for ever imprescriptible. The glory of the French republic commanded that wherever the protection of her arms extended, liberty should be established and tyranny overthrown. This decree was adopted by the Convention, amidst unanimous applauses*. Thus did France arrogate to herself an authority, without appeal, either to sovereigns or people, of regulating the territorial rights of nations by her own despotic decrees, founded on a supposed code of the rights of man, and on the glory of the republic.

Quitting Brussels, Dumouriez encamped at Cortenbergue, intending to form manufactories of arms at Mechlin. The Austrians occupied the heights of Cumpitch, where he attacked them with success, and, after a long and obstinate conflict, encamped on the field of battle, and established his head quarters at Tirlemont, from which place the battle takes its name. After four days he encamped at Saint Tron. He next came up with the imperialists, who made a very fine retreat, near Liege, and, after a smart partial engagement near Varoux, entered the city of Liege. Miranda having taken Antwerp, and Namur having surrendered to Valence, the conquest of the Low Countries, except the Duchy of Luxemburg and the little town of Heure, was completed in a month. Dumouriez was now desirous to take Maestricht; but, being restrained by the ministers, he finished the campaign by the capture of Aix-la-Chapelle, where he established his winter quarters.

Battle of Tirlemont.

Liege and other towns taken.

In the Convention, the tidings of success were received with a joy resembling intoxication. Young Egalité, in person, announced the victory of Jemappes, and produced the letters of his chief, in which his conduct was justly lauded. Expressions of dissatisfaction

Effect of these successes.

* *Moniteur*, 22 Nov. 1792, p. 1387.

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Flanders
united to
France.
Dec. 15.

Plundered.

had before been heard at the impropriety of advancing so young a man (he was only nineteen years of age) to the rank of colonel; but now they made him a general, and conferred an officer's commission on Dumouriez. Here ended the happiness and the glory of Dumouriez. He was, from motives of self defence, as well as ambition, desirous of being the protector of Belgium. The acrimony of party and the probable course of events forbad him to hope for honour, or even safety, in his own country; but Flanders seemed to open a scene where, in the height of military glory, and amid the blessings of the people, he might have enjoyed an honourable superiority, sufficient to reward his exertions and gratify his ambition. But the Convention viewed his achievements only as the means of plunder and aggrandizement; they decreed the Belgic provinces to be French departments; the wealth of the clergy and the people was destined to replenish their coffers or satiate their adherents. Two of their most needy and least scrupulous dependents, Danton and Lacroix, were dispatched as commissioners, and they fulfilled their mission according to expectation. The churches, for the protection of which, only five years before, the people had flown to arms against their legitimate government, were utterly despoiled; not only were their plate and treasures seized, but the pictures and ornaments of the consecrated buildings were torn down and sent away to Paris. Under the name of requisition, every kind of property, even lace and other peculiar manufactures of the country, was appropriated, and the French soldiers, supplied with depreciated assignats, forced them on the shop-keepers at par, extorting not only goods, but ready money, in exchange. Camus, who was joint commissioner with the other two, expressed his dissatisfaction at these proceedings; they were carried to such an extent in the agricultural districts, that the victors themselves began to apprehend a want of supplies. Dumouriez, cramped by these impediments in his military operations, made ineffectual remonstrances. He spoke with contempt of the Convention, and threatened them with the vengeance

of a victorious general ; but they defied him, and soon gave him to understand that he had no property in his conquests or in his troops.

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Retreat of
Clerfaye.

Clerfaye, maintaining a resolute and judicious defence, made good his retreat behind the Roer, which the French did not attempt to pass, and there awaited the effect of preparations which were making by the Emperor for renewing the campaign with greater strength and vigour. Dumouriez, less apprehensive of enemies at Vienna than in Paris, again repaired to that city ; but he spent his time, without effect, in miserable intrigues and indecisive efforts to avert the fate of the King ; and returned to head quarters, fully convinced that he was no longer to rely on the respect, affection, or gratitude of his countrymen*.

1793. Jan.
Dumouriez.
again in Paris.

Such was the close of this ever-memorable campaign, which affords unlimited scope for reflection, and, with its concomitant events, forms a new and most important era in the annals of the world. To descant on the various ways in which they affected government and social life, would only be to repeat that which must have occurred to the mind of every observer ; but, leaving aside the more grave and weighty reflections, it may be fit to notice some particulars, which, although of less importance, had considerable effect. Not only had the French changed the old system of making war, but they had invented, or at least very much amplified, the means of describing its progress and speaking of their opponents ; an alteration the more remarkable, as it was never departed from in the long series of martial conflicts which ensued. Boastful accounts of their military achievements were not unusual, although perhaps they had never been carried to so great an excess ; for example, Bournonville, the French Ajax, described in bombastic terms a victory in which fifteen hundred of the enemy were killed or wounded, while the French sustained no loss, except that a drummer was wounded in his little finger. The op-

Observations.

* Lacrételle, tome x. c. 14. Thiers, tome iii. c. 5. Mémoires d'un Homme d'État, tome ii. p. 1 to 99. Mémoires du General Dumouriez, tome iv. p. 45. Victoires, Conquêtes, &c. tome i. 67—81 to 93.

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posed troops were always described, in Mirabeau's phrase, as "satellites of despotism;" they were always made to "bite the dust," or were "driven from the field " with the bayonet in their loins." The frivolous revolutionary pedantry which changed the forms of description and salutation in society, was followed up by one more solemn, but equally empty, by which the modern names of nations were exchanged for those of a remote antiquity: thus the Dutch were Batavians; the Swiss, Helvetians; the people of Flanders and Brabant, Belgians; the Poles, Sarmatians; the Genoese, Ligurians; and the people of Savoy, Allobroges.

Formation of
Societies in
England.

In England, a party existed, few members of which were distinguished for birth, wealth, or learning, who seemed anxious to precipitate this country into the courses, and to desire the results, which had been witnessed in France. This party was distributed among the societies already noticed; and, although their members were not all composed of the same inferior class of persons, it might be truly said, that if some of the few men of station, birth, or learning, who were numbered among them did not distinctly contemplate the overthrow of government, the destruction of the church, and the abolition of titles, the great majority avowed these intentions in their fullest extent, and lauded with their loudest acclamations every action and speech in the French legislature, commune, and clubs, which could forward such ends. In vain, to a few of the nobility and well-educated gentry, did the events in France hold out their impressive lesson, of men, who, having, with intentions perhaps pure and honourable, given birth and force to the revolution, had been despised or ruined in attempts to mitigate its excesses; they would not perceive that they were intended merely to be tools and agents in the hands of their desperate associates, to be used or displayed while they could promote their cause or lend a sanction to their proceedings; but that, when the greater objects were attained, or rendered certain, they would be rejected or sacrificed, as occasion might require, or interest direct. The associations in London had, in

imitation of the Jacobins, established correspondences in many parts of the kingdom; and some had entered into direct communication with, and sent personal missionaries to, the National Convention. As their efforts demanded the notice of government, it will be proper to mention their formation, and some of their proceedings.

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About the time of Dr. Price's decease, and for some months afterward, an active communication of condolence and an ample effusion of political sentiments took place between the Revolution Society* and those in France, which continued with increasing force of mutual approbation, even after the republic was declared, and the King's life menaced. In the course of these communications†, the French societies granted the honours of affiliation to their brothers in London‡, and the honours so conferred were gratefully accepted and acknowledged. With much pomp and self-importance, these societies, on both sides of the Channel, addressed, congratulated, and eulogised each other; denounced tyrants, deposed kings, and fixed the future destinies of nations. In whatever contempt the actual power of the societies in England might be held, those in France did really represent the character, the wishes, and, so far as they could yet be disclosed, the designs of the active, influential body of the people; and it was hoped that the espousal and publication of their acts, decrees, and sentiments, would produce a desire to adopt and imitate them||. The death of Dr. Price was said to open anew the wounds which had been made by that of Mirabeau, and in many epistles, the names of the two were cited together as apostles of liberty, implacable enemies of tyrants, models of philanthropy,

Revolution
Society.

* See vol. iv. p. 543.

† All these extracts are taken from a pamphlet, entitled "The Correspondence of the Revolution Society in London, with the National Assembly and with various societies of the friends of liberty in France and England." This book, it is said (Rivington's Annual Register, 1792, part ii. p. 135), was published by the society and soon suppressed; if such were the fact, fear of prosecution or exposure may less have been the motive, than shame at the ignorance of the compiler. In many parts, the idiom and the grammar of the English and French languages are equally set at defiance.

‡ Aix, 4th May, 1791, p. 135, and many others.

|| 8th May, 1791, p. 139.

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and benefactors of the human race*. Nor did the panegyrists of Dr. Price forget to quote from his writings, that “kings are the first servants of the people; that the title Majesty, which is too lavishly “given them, was never meant to express their own “majesty, but the majesty of the people they represent†.” Two deputies from the society at Nantes were received in London in an honourable and flattering manner‡. The celebration of the fourteenth of July, by the societies in England, was the theme of unbounded gratulation on both sides; and it was predicted that soon, probably in the following year, one federation in one Champ de Mars would denote the union of the French and English people||. In the list of the societies with whom they held correspondence, they enumerated, in France, besides the Commune of Paris, twenty-five; and, in England, Cambridge, Manchester, Norwich, and Taunton§. Their name occasioned an observation from the young friends of liberty in Paris, that “by itself it ought to be the terror of tyrants, by recalling to their minds the happy epoch of the English revolution**. On this subject, the society itself observed, “Our enemies call us ‘a society for “‘revolutions;’ we glory in the title; so long as a des-
“potic government exists, we shall endeavour to
“deserve it††.”

Society for
Constitutional
Information.

Toward the close of the American war, an association had been formed, under the name of “A Society for Constitutional Information‡‡.” Among its early members were individuals of the highest estimation for rank and talent; the Duke of Richmond and Lord Mahon, Mr. Fox, Mr. Pitt, and Mr. Sheridan; there were also some of less consideration, although of the active, enterprising, and persevering temper, which leads men to great attempts, and often to violent extremes; among these may be enumerated the Rev. Mr. Wyvill, Major Cartwright, Mr. John Horne

* Pp. 138, 142, 149, 164, 165, 167, 168, 204, 213.

† P. 174, 175.

‡ May, 1790, p. 152.

|| Lille, 25th July, 1791, and see p. 153, et passim.

§ Report of an Anniversary Meeting, Nov. 4, 1791, p. 4.

** P. 164.

†† P. 203.

‡‡ In 1780.

Tooke, and Mr. John Frost*. This society was declared to be instituted for the purpose of distributing tracts, at their own expense and under their direction; but it could never be dangerously numerous, as a preliminary donation of one guinea was required from each member, and an annual subscription, which was not to exceed five guineas; or the member might compound, by one disbursement of ten times that amount. They ushered themselves into the world by a declaration of the rights of every man in the community, infants, insane persons, and criminals excepted, to the enjoyment of an actual share in appointing those who were to frame the laws, and to be the guardians of every man's life, property, and peace. All who had no voice nor vote in the electing of representatives were declared to be absolutely enslaved; and they asserted it to be the right of the commonalty to elect a new House of Commons once in every year†. The political tenets of this society were of such a nature, that many, by whom, in the inconsiderate period of youth, they were espoused, felt obliged, as time, experience, or circumstances impelled, to repudiate them; hence, until it was vivified by the breath of the French revolution, the existence of the society was little known, nor would it then have made much impression, but for its junction and affiliation with other bodies. Its most distinguished and respectable members ceased to attend, and their places were supplied by men of a different description; but, on the whole, their numbers were few, and their revenues ridiculously small‡.

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Another society had been established, called "the Friends of the People." The leading members were high and honourable men, and, whatever anticipations might be formed, or jealousies entertained, there was nothing in their present actual proceedings to create alarm. They sought reform to a limited, and, if not to

1792.
Friends of the
People.

* All these names are found in papers of the society, dated in 1780 and 1782. Letters of Lord Carysfort to the Huntingdon Committee, and Address to the People from the Coventry Society.

† Address to the Public from the Society, dated April, 1780.

‡ Stephens's Life of John Horne Tooke, vol. i. p. 435, vol. ii. p. 144.

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December 15.

a wise, not to an unconstitutional extent*. Their views were directed only to the House of Commons, and they did not seek their end by any irregular or disreputable means; they did not affect to derive power from combination, or to give currency to their opinions by affiliation; nor did they court, or pretend to any union with, the demagogues of France; or, as a body, connect themselves with the politics of that country. In an authentic declaration of their principles and opinions, signed by Mr. Whitbread, as their chairman, they announced their determination to persevere in their endeavours in favour of reform, until the object should be obtained, or should be found to be evidently unattainable by their efforts, or by any of those means in which they could participate. They called for the support of the country in its own cause, and solicited the assistance of every man who approved of their design; but earnestly exhorted the true friends of reform to discourage and resist every attempt to support it by any other means than those which the laws permit.

1793.
January.
London Corresponding Society.

Another union, called the London Corresponding Society, was, in every respect, the antipodes of this. Its aim, as its title denotes, was to spread opinions by communication with affiliated bodies in the country,—its members were an association of those most violent and least estimable of other societies, with the least respectable followers of literature, and the most noisy orators of the debating clubs. If a few individuals, not falling within these descriptions, were found among them, they were exceptions from the general mass, but did not impart to it a characteristic description. Like the other societies, they founded their institution on the pretence of reforming Parliament, and they proposed to unite into one firm and permanent body; for the purpose of acquiring and imparting exact information of the present state of the House of Commons; for obtaining a peaceful, but adequate remedy to the intolerable grievance of unequal representation; and for corresponding and co-operating with other socie-

* Bishop Watson's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 431.

ties, united for the same objects. They were to separate into divisions, beginning with thirty members, and these were to divide again when they amounted to double that number. Each member was to pay to the secretary of his division one penny per week, or one shilling and a penny per quarter. The sums so contributed to form one common stock, to pay for postage, stationery, and printing. They represented as scandalous abuses the qualification of forty shillings a year for county voters; that of six hundred pounds a year for a county member; the triennial and the septennial acts. The supposed representation of the people, which was called "the Commons of England in Parliament assembled," was analyzed, and a list made of the boroughs and towns which returned members having but a small number of electors, together with the patrons under whose influence they existed. "Could they obtain an honest Parliament, an annual Parliament, a Parliament wherein each individual should have his representative, soon would they see liberty restored, the press free, the laws simplified, judges unbiassed, juries independent, needless places and pensions retrenched, immoderate salaries reduced, the public better served, taxes diminished, and the necessities of life more within the reach of the poor; youth better educated; prisons less crowded; old age better provided for; and sumptuous feasts, at the expense of the starving poor, less frequent. Contested elections, none, or very few, and soon determined; party debates, none, the interests of the people being one; long speeches much diminished; honest men seeking reason, not oratory; no placemen in the senate, corrupt influence would die away, and with it all tedious, obstinate, ministerial opposition to measures calculated for the public good; detesting chicanery, oppression and injustice of every kind, this honest Parliament, finding that the laws wanted simplification and arrangement, would set about it, however destructive their labours might prove to the sordid interest of an ambitious judge, a prostituted counsel, a packed

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April 2.

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“ jury, or a vile herd of pettifoggers, trading justices, bailiffs, or runners. The people’s Parliament, finding that, under various pretences, grants of common land had been obtained by sundry persons, no ways to the benefit of the community, but very much to the distress of the poor, the same would be soon restored to the public, and the robbed peasant again enabled annually to supply his distressed family with an increased quantity of bread, out of the profit arising from the liberty regained of grazing a cow, two or three sheep, or a brood of geese*.”

August 6.

Had this visionary rant, which was published as an address to the nation, bounded the views of the society; had their efforts been limited to the mere enforcement of the topics really connected with the reform of Parliament, argument, a reference to experience, and occasionally a judicious application of legal intervention, might have been sufficient to counteract the mischief; but, constituted as they were, the extension of their numbers, formed, in a great part, of persons in the lower ranks of society; the increasing venom of their publications; their junction with the Constitutional and other societies; were calculated to excite apprehension and demand vigilance. In the metropolis, they held meetings in about thirty public houses, situated in obscure streets and lanes, and they had correspondence with about thirty societies, distributed over various parts of England and Scotland†.

This society conformed heartily to the principles which actuated the dominating party in France; and they gave way to the instinct of servile and ridiculous imitation. Their words of form, in their debates, decrees, and manifestoes, precisely resembled those of their prototypes; they adopted the quaint foppery of denominating each other, and those whom they addressed, citizens; and as the incommodious inflexibility of our language did not admit, like the French, of an

* From a pamphlet, published by the society and distributed gratis, comprising three addresses, and entitled generally, the London Corresponding Society’s Address and Resolutions.

† The list is in Rivington’s Annual Register, 1792, p. ii. p. 152.

elegant and expressive feminine word, they clumsily termed a female adherent, citizeness, and they published an address on the duties of citizenship. It was believed by many, and not without strong inducing circumstances, that the feeble funds of this society were aided by contributions administered by unknown hands, but derived from France*. Their proceedings were undoubtedly watched by government, and all their transactions speedily and accurately reported. The channels through which information flowed are not authentically disclosed; but the treachery of some of their members is strongly and not unreasonably suspected†. Although, in their formal association, the Constitutional was kept apart from the Corresponding Society, yet such were the conformity of their actions, and their avowed union on some points, that no reasonable doubt could be entertained that one mind, one genius, one interest, governed and actuated both. The societies in the metropolis and the affiliated branches in the country professed their desire to see the example of France imitated by the formation of a National Convention, by the destruction of ecclesiastical dignities, and, as it was pretty plainly intimated, by the abolition of all titles and personal distinctions.

Against the powers at war with France, their declamations were vehement and incessant; but when the repulse of the invaders gave triumph to the republican cause, the Constitutional Society, in the ardour of their exultation, framed an address to the National Convention, styling them "Servants of a sovereign people, and benefactors of mankind;" congratulating them that their revolution had arrived at the point of perfection which warranted a title which could alone accord with the character of true legislators; the glorious victory of the 10th of August had finally pre-

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Vigilance of
government.

Address to the
National
Convention.

Nov. 9.

* Memoirs of Lord Liverpool, p. 47.

† See Williams's Life of Sir Thomas Lawrence, vol. i. p. 291. I also remember that the report of a treacherous communication was very current, and much believed in; and I have heard from indubitable authority anecdotes which clearly convince me that the information possessed by government was so early and so exact, that an active and trusted member of the society must have disclosed it.

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pared the way for a constitution, which they would establish on the basis of reason and nature. After many complaints against the mass of delusion accumulated on mankind, the opposition made to French principles by tyrants and slaves, whose instrument was ignorance, the parent and child of submission, the addressers said, that, although the government had still the power, and perhaps the inclination, to employ hirelings to contradict them, still they considered themselves as speaking the sentiments of a great majority of the English nation. This mass of arrogant fustian was ordered to be transmitted to the National Convention, and, being authenticated by the signatures of Lord Semphill and Dr. Towers, was delivered at their bar by Mr. Joel Barlow, an American, and Mr. John Frost, the attorney, whose name occurs in a former chapter. Such were the sentiments expressed by these societies before the French had proceeded to the completion of their atrocities, when the insurrection of the 10th of August, and the massacres of September, were their chief claims to admiration; but, as they advanced in their career, the Constitutional Society, to express a full sympathy in all the sentiments and proceedings of their Gallic friends and models, voted that citizen St. André and Citizen Barrère, each being one of the most judicious and enlightened friends of human liberty, should be honorary members of their body; and the Sheffield Branch Society voted that the speeches of these two regicides, on the sentence against the King, should be inserted in their books, and their resolution published in the newspapers.

Vote of the
Constitutional
Society.

1793.
Jan 18 and 25.
The Sheffield
Branch.

Proceedings of
the Friends of
the People.

1792.
May 12.

It is not to be supposed that the respectable portion of those who wished for a reform of Parliament adopted the visionary views, or sanctioned the extreme proceedings, of these societies. An early declaration of their dissent was transmitted to the Constitutional Society from the Friends of the People, by Lord John Russel, in an answer to Major Cartwright, who, as chairman, had communicated their address to the people. "We profess not," his lordship said, "to entertain a wish that the great plan of public benefit

“ which Mr. Paine has so powerfully recommended
 “ will be speedily carried into effect; nor to amuse
 “ our fellow-citizens with the magnificent promise of
 “ obtaining for them ‘ the rights of the people in the
 “ ‘ full extent,’—the indefinite language of delusion,
 “ which, by opening unbounded projects of political
 “ adventure, tends to destroy that public opinion which
 “ is the support of all free governments, and to excite
 “ a spirit of innovation of which no wisdom can foresee
 “ the effects, and no skill direct the course. We view
 “ man, as he is, the creature of habit, as well as of
 “ reason. We think it therefore our bounden duty to
 “ propose no extreme changes, which, however specious
 “ in theory, can never be accomplished without vio-
 “ lence to the settled opinions of mankind, nor at-
 “ tempted without endangering some of the most esti-
 “ mable advantages which we confessedly enjoy. As-
 “ sociations formed in the face of power, in opposition
 “ to the interests of our present legislators, evince that
 “ individual security and personal independence are
 “ already established by our laws.” He then ex-
 plained the views of the body of which he was the
 chairman, which he said were those of men detesting
 anarchy, yet sincere friends of the people; and he
 concluded, in the name of the society, with declining
 all future intercourse with an association, whose views
 and objects, as far as could be collected from their
 various resolutions and proceedings, appeared to be
 irreconcilable with those real interests on which they
 professed to inform and enlighten the people. How-
 ever any party might differ from the Friends of the
 People in their views of the reforms to be desired,
 no one could be justly alarmed or displeased at
 opinions expressed in terms so manly and dignified;
 but there was reason to fear that the perpetual acti-
 vity, the coarse excitements, and the clamorous appeals
 to all the bad passions of the lower classes, might pro-
 duce the evils which the noble writer deprecated, might
 unsettle by violence the established opinions of man-
 kind, and endanger the inestimable advantages which
 were enjoyed by British subjects*.

* The papers from which these facts are derived are published in the first

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Conduct of
Lord Semphill.

That sentiments so unexceptionable should be entertained by all, even of those whom rank and honour ought to have restrained, was not to be expected: the vehemence of contest or the desire of renown, if for peculiarity alone, will ever impel some to adopt an extreme, and even questionable, course. An instance was afforded by Hugh Lord Semphill, who, although a Scotch peer, and a lieutenant in the third regiment of foot-guards, made himself so prominent in the proceedings of the Constitutional Society, particularly in the address to the National Convention, that he was dismissed from the service, with leave to receive from his successor the regulated price of his commission. His lordship endeavoured, by publishing a statement of his case, to interest the public in his behalf, but had not the good fortune to gain consideration, either as an apostle of liberty, or a martyr of despotism*.

1792.
Nov. 30.

Publications.

"Killing no
murder" re-
printed.

with a regi-
dal dedication.

These societies and their individual members were anxious to derive support from the press, the freedom of which they denied, whilst they pushed it to its utmost excess. Their correspondences and proclamations were distributed at a very cheap rate, and often gratuitously, to an extent which afforded additional reasons for believing that they were aided by a clandestine supply. The pamphlet, by Colonel Titus, called "Killing no Murder," which, it has been said, embittered the last days of the Protector Cromwell, was reprinted, with a dedication to Gustavus, the late King of Sweden, Leopold, late Emperor of Germany, and the Empress of Russia, in which, after reminding the sovereign who survived, of the recent death of the other two, and exhorting her to consume the few remaining moments of her life, rather in executing plans which would expiate her past crimes, than in conspiracies against the freedom of nations, which must bring her grey hairs with infamy to the grave, the editor adds, "Those," said Brutus, "whom the laws cannot reach, the dagger should."

and second Reports of the Committee of Secrecy of the House of Lords and Commons in 1794.

* Short Address to the Public; by Hugh, Lord Semphill, 1793.

For those whom such coarse incentives might fail to actuate, light reading was prepared ; tours, excursions, trips, novels, and romances were used as means of spreading the favoured opinions. Female writers employed themselves in this branch of the enterprize ; and one in particular stepped beyond the usual precincts of her sex, by publishing a thick octavo volume in vindication of the “ Rights of Woman.” Her arguments, however confidently urged, were not calculated materially to affect the state of female society in England ; whatever charm of impassioned eloquence she might have endeavoured to throw into her work, our ladies were not likely to be influenced by doctrines which, as the authoress herself states, enabled her to “ converse as “ a man with medical men on anatomical subjects, and “ to compare the proportions of the human body with “ artists*.” It is true that the lady pays a compliment to the modesty of the gentlemen with whom she pursued the inquiries ; but few were disposed to return it by any eulogy on her own. Nor would many of her sex probably acquiesce in the apology for their errors, or the deprecation of censure with which she concludes:—“ If women have not any inherent rights “ to claim ; by the same rule, their duties vanish, for “ rights and duties are inseparable. Be just then, O “ ye men of understanding ! and mark not more severely what women do amiss, than the vicious tricks “ of the horse or the ass, for whom ye provide provender, and allow her the privileges of ignorance, to “ whom ye deny the rights of reason, or ye will be “ worse than the Egyptian task-masters, expecting “ virtue where nature has not given understanding†.”

By such means it might be hoped to unhinge society, by depraving the understandings of an interesting and influential portion ; but the publications chiefly relied on, were those which manfully and directly assailed the principles of order and the foundations of government. Mr. Barlow, the joint emissary with Mr. Frost, had greatly recommended himself by a publica-

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Other publications.

Rights of
Women.

Barlow's
advice to the
privileged
orders.

* Vindication of the Rights of Woman, p. 278.

† P. 451.

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1792.	
Rights of Man, Part 2.	
1791. March 23.	
1792. May 4.	
May 18. Cheap editions published.	When, in compliance, as he said, with the earnest desire expressed in a great number of letters from various parts of the country, Mr. Paine declared his determination to publish them in a cheaper form, thanks were unbounded. In announcing this intelligence to the Constitutional Society, he intimated the intention of ministers to institute a prosecution against him as his reason. The proclamation against seditious writings appearing almost immediately afterward, he addressed, in the shape of a pamphlet, a letter to Mr. Dundas, repelling the epithets "wicked and seditious," as applied to his works. There were not, he said, to be found, in the writings of any author, ancient or modern, on the subject of government, a spirit of greater benignity, and a stronger inculcation of moral principles, than in his; and in his last moments he should with happiness remember, that he had written the Rights of Man; and he renewed his attacks on hereditary succession, and on the supposed authority of kings. His principal argument against the system of England was drawn from the expensiveness of our establishment, compared with the cheapness of the American government, and it was illustrated by a glowing picture of the weak and impoverished condition in which the United States were left at the termination of the war; their recovery from embarrassment, and subsequent advance in prosperity, com-
Paine's Letter to Mr. Dundas.	

merce, and wealth. Such a comparison was well calculated to produce its effect on the minds for which it was intended; minds which would not perceive the difference between an infant or adolescent society, and one of established maturity; the growth and expansion of the one afford matter of observation, and often of surprise; while, in those who contemplate the other, no such emotions are excited, unless they take the pains to consider the well-sustained vigour and energy of the perfected body, in which advance in growth is not expected, and wisdom can only be exercised in averting the inroads of disease and retarding the process of decay.

A criminal information against the author of the Rights of Man was filed*; the Constitutional Society voted a subscription to defray his expenses; the issue, in due course, came on to be tried at Guildhall, before Lord Kenyon and a special jury. The cause of the defendant was sustained by five counsel, of whom the principal, Mr. Erskine and Mr. Piggott, showed an honourable elevation of mind, which stamped a lofty character on the English bar: they held the offices of Attorney and Solicitor General to the Prince of Wales; and, although premonished that their voluntarily undertaking this defence would be followed by their dismissal, they pursued the path which they conceived to be that of professional duty, and met the consequence unconcerned. The task of the Attorney-general, in itself not difficult, was lightened by an indiscreet letter of vulgar vituperation, addressed to him by the defendant, in which he spoke with clumsy raillery of his own safety in a foreign land, despised a verdict which might as well be obtained against the man in the moon as against him. A verdict, he affirmed, could not be obtained, except through a packed jury; he spoke of the King and Royal Family as Mr. Guelph and his profligate sons; and undisguisedly menaced the Attorney-general with personal consequences, if he persevered in the prosecution.

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Criminal
information
filed.

December 18
Trial.

* Easter Term, 1792.

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This letter greatly embarrassed Mr. Erskine in his defence; he endeavoured to avert from it the attention of the jury, and confine them entirely to the matter alleged on the record and shown in the pamphlet. Technically it might be right to enforce this argument; but the practical adoption of it was not legally to be required; for, in such a case, every act tending to show the mind of the party accused is to be received in evidence; nor, when once the letter had been read, was it possible to reject it from recollection. The learned and able advocate performed all that could be achieved for his client: with his usual ability, he vindicated the freedom of opinion and the propositions advanced by Mr. Paine, citing the authority of the most approved writers on British politics, and many eminent party leaders and learned judges; among them were Locke, Milton, Harrington (author of *Oceana*), Hume, Sir George Savile, Dr. Paley, Blackstone, and Lord Loughborough. He also dwelt copiously on the early publications of Mr. Burke, and the opinion subscribed to by Mr. Pitt, concluding with the answer which Lucian has put into the mouth of an unbeliever, when the king of the gods threatened to strike him with his bolt. "Now, Jupiter, I know you are wrong; you must be so when you appeal to your thunder." But the eloquence, learning, and wit of the advocate were employed in vain: like the giants in the mythology, he was kept down by the force of an irresistible pressure: the gross libels on the record and the indiscreet and insolent letter to the Attorney-general, lay like mountains on the breast of his defender. The reply of the Attorney-general and the summing up of the Lord Chief Justice were rendered unnecessary, the jury declaring, without a moment's hesitation, that they were satisfied, and pronouncing a verdict of guilty*.

Defendant
pronounced
guilty.

Resentment of
the societies.

December 21.

This verdict was greatly resented by the societies, who voted that it was not warranted by the law or constitution, and they complained that "vile associa-

* Trial of Thomas Paine, from the notes of the short-hand writer, 1793; also Howell's *State Trials*, vol. xxii. col. 357.

" tions had worked the public mind into such a fervour
" that a jury would, by the intimation of a judge, find
" any thing a libel*." Mr. Paine, who of course did
not present himself to receive the judgment of the
court, was outlawed, and in many parts of the country
his book was burnt by the people, in company with
his effigy†.

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A new society was established, under the title of
" Friends of the Freedom of the Press," many members
of which were of a highly respectable description. Mr.
Erskine, at their first meeting, delivered an address,
which, to prevent misrepresentation, he had reduced
to writing. It was printed by order of the society,
but no other display seems to have marked their
existence‡.

22nd.
Friends of the
Freedom of
the Press.

The " vile association," alluded to by the Consti-
tutional Society, was an assemblage, at first, of a few
persons, anxious to counteract what they considered
unwarranted attempts against the constitution. They
originated an association for preserving liberty and
property against republicans and levellers, and soon
found their number augmented by many individuals of
rank and wealth. For the diffusion of their opinions
they took the same means with their antagonists; they
created societies in various parts of the kingdom, and
published tracts, written in a familiar style, at a very
cheap rate, with large allowances for gratuitous dis-
tribution. The adverse society saw with undisguised
rancour this employment of their own tactics against
themselves; with characteristic illiberality, they im-
puted motives and stigmatized individuals. Mr. Reeves,
a barrister of unblemished character, who presided at
the meetings of the associations, was held up to ex-
ecration, and the whole society was described as an
assembly of public plunderers, spies, and informers§.

November 20.
Association
against re-
publicans and
levellers.

* Second Report of the House of Commons, Appendix, p. 31.

† Life of Thomas Paine, written by George Chalmers, Esq. under the name
of Francis Oldys, tenth edition, p. 171.

‡ Their first proceedings and Mr. Erskine's speech were published in a pam-
phlet, 1792.

§ Not to mention the daily scurrilous attacks of the clubs and of the pam-
phleteers and news-writers devoted to them, it may be proper to notice a detailed

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Riots and
tumults.June 5.
Mount-street.9th.
Edinburgh.November 15.
Dundee.

Happily for the association, their lists did not contain the name of one individual against whose life or conduct any just accusation could be advanced; their publications were temperate, and calculated to inform the common, without disgusting the more refined, reader, and their circulation and reception were flattering proofs that they were both agreeable and useful*.

Whether impelled by the exertions of the societies and their emissaries, or influenced only by the spirit of the times, the people, in various places, engaged in riots and tumults with more combination and pertinacity than had been usual, and the aid of the military was, on more than one occasion, required, for the preservation of the peace. An instance occurred in Mount-street, Grosvenor-square, where, in consequence of the injudicious arrest of some persons who had been celebrating, with rather extraordinary merriment, the anniversary of the King's birth-day, a prodigious concourse was collected before the house, and during the whole night kept the neighbourhood in alarm; commencing the destruction of the watch-house and other buildings, braving the magistrates and all civil authority; nor were they finally dispersed until the aid of the military, both horse and foot, had been procured. In Edinburgh, a riot of more serious aspect, and without the plea of any immediate grievance, was raised; the house of Mr. Dundas was attacked, the windows, ornaments, and furniture destroyed, and Melville Castle, his country seat, was menaced. The military could not disperse the rioters until some of them were killed and wounded. A rising at Dundee was conducted with equal violence, and had more of a political character, although no fatal consequences ensued. About a

and furious invective issued by Dr Towers, a dissenting clergyman, and well known as a literary character. He inveighed with great severity against the declaration issued by the society; nor did the reverend critic forget to mention that "John Reeves, Esq. was Chief Justice of Newfoundland, Steward of the "Duchy of Lancaster, Commissioner of Bankruptcies, Law Clerk in Lord "Hawkesbury's office, and Treasurer of the Westminster Police."—Tracts on Political and other Subjects, by Joseph Towers, LL.D. vol iii. pp. 253, 265, 267, 277.

* A collection of their tracts was made, and published by several eminent booksellers.

thousand persons assembled, and, after burning in effigy two gentlemen, who were obnoxious to them, proceeded to their houses, broke the windows, pulled down the rails of their gardens, and demolished some of their furniture. They then demanded the keys of the belfry from the magistrates, and set all the bells a ringing, having in the mean time planted the tree of liberty in the market-place. A conspiracy was formed in the King's Bench prison to blow up the walls with gunpowder, and the parties, five in number, were convicted. At the same period, a prosecution was commenced against two prisoners for debt, in the Fleet prison, who had published a hand-bill, declaring that the house was to be let, and peaceable possession given on the 1st of January, being the commencement of the first year of British liberty. "The republic of France," it said, "having rooted out tyranny, bastiles are no longer necessary in Europe."

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King's Bench
Prison.

20th.
Fleet Prison.

In London, the debating societies were amply used as the means of promoting the aims of the disaffected. These institutions were, in many respects, of indisputable utility, especially when their disquisitions were limited to moral, historical, and literary subjects; but it could not be expected, when the public mind was intent on matters of the highest importance and general interest, that men, assembled to reason and discuss, should avoid all reference to them, or, in time, omit to make them a principal object of inquiry. A person, named John Thelwall, had for some years made himself conspicuous in these debates; he was also an active and distinguished member of the Corresponding Society, and an acting member of one of these debating clubs, which held its meetings at the King's Arms tavern, in Cornhill, to which it had removed from the Coach-maker's Hall. This club professed to be opened for free debate; but, under the influence of recent events and opinions, the freedom was reduced to that of saying whatever the speaker chose, on one side; if he uttered opinions adverse to those of the leaders of the day, he was, according to their system of liberality, interrupted by scoffs and silenced by clamour. Re-

Debating
societies.

One at the
King's Arms
tavern in
Cornhill.

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Discussion in-
terrupted,

Nov. 26.
and society
dispersed.

turning to town from a country circuit, in which he had caused political questions relating to the state of Europe to be publicly debated, Mr. Thelwall found, as he expressed it, "the public all awake. The fate of the great criminal of France was in agitation, and, together with the barbarous manifesto of the Duke of Brunswick, furnished eternal topics of conversation and debate; and the discussions of the society partook of all the animation to be expected from the state of politics." While such was the public feeling, the society proposed to discuss "whether the neutrality of the maritime powers of Europe was to be attributed to their approbation of the French revolution, or their dread of introducing similar consequences among themselves." On this occasion, an individual undertook to interrupt the proceeding by such gross and continued abuse, that, after a long and noisy struggle, the debate was adjourned*. Before the day of adjournment came, Sir James Saunderson, the Lord Mayor, had convinced the tavern-keeper that it would be against his interest to permit the future meetings of the society; and a public announcement to that effect was made. About four hundred persons, nevertheless, assembled; but the Lord Mayor had previously secured the entrance by a strong body of constables: the intended audience made some noise; but, at the appearance of the chief magistrate, with the city officers, yielded to his admonition and departed. The disappointed orator inveighed against the illegal and oppressive combination to annihilate the grand palladium of the British constitution, the liberty of speech, both in a letter to the Lord Mayor, and in a placard in which he offered twenty guineas (the price of eight hundred and forty admissions) for the use, for one night, of a room capable of containing from two to five hundred persons. The room was not obtained, the letter received no answer; but the Court of Common Council unanimously voted their thanks to the Lord Mayor for suppressing the

* Mr. Thelwall asserts, and, from information which I had at the time, I believe correctly, that this tumult was planned and premeditated.

seditionous debating society. and passed resolutions declaring their steady determination to support the sacred constitution*.

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Conduct of
government.

Considering all these societies separately, the insignificance of their members, the presumption and folly of their resolutions, and their want of means, money least of all excepted, to produce effective agitation, it might be supposed that government could with safety, and in propriety ought, to have viewed their proceedings with indifference, if not with contempt, and, content with acquiring an exact knowledge of their views and arrangements, awaited the moment when decisive declarations, followed by corresponding actions, should have placed the parties within the direct aim and reach of the law ; but when the activity of the societies, their extended associations, the effect already produced by their principles, and the certainty that, if their cause could acquire a certain stability, it would not languish for want of the aid of wealth or the countenance of rank ; when remote and recent history, and the dreadful display of events resulting from combinations more feeble and less consolidated than those in question, were considered ; when the state of France, the avowed inclination of the English societies to adopt the model and rely on the assistance of that country, and the undisguised encouragement given to that expectation, were justly considered,—it appeared to government that the time was come when further delay would have been a criminal dereliction of their duty to the nation.

Accordingly, the King issued a proclamation, stating that, notwithstanding that of the twenty-first of May, the utmost industry was still employed, by evil-disposed persons within the kingdom, acting in concert with persons in foreign parts, to subvert the laws and established constitution, and to destroy all order and government ; and that a spirit of tumult and disorder, so excited, having lately shewn itself in acts of riot and insurrection, he thought it necessary to draw out and

Dec. 1,
Proclamation
for embodying
the militia,

* Chiefly from Mr. Thelwall's own account, in the introduction to his Political Lectures, vol. i. part i.—Annual Register, and other publications.

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and convening
Parliament.
Dec. 1.
The Tower
fortified.
 4th.
Proceedings
of the City of
London.
Meeting of
merchants.
5th.
Their declara-
tion.
Tumult at
Manchester.

embody the militia; and a particular order for that purpose was directed to the Lords Lieutenant of ten of the most extensive and populous counties. By another proclamation, and in obedience to a statute, his Majesty directed that the Parliament, which had been prorogued to the third of January, should meet on the thirteenth of December.

These proclamations, with the fortifying and guarding of the Tower, which immediately followed, were viewed with great satisfaction by the loyal part of the community. In London, a Court of Lieutenancy ordered that a company of the militia should be kept on duty night and day at the Artillery-house, to be ready for service at a moment's notice. A numerous and respectable meeting of merchants, bankers, traders, and others, convened at the hall of one of the Companies, passed a resolution, and signed a declaration, that they would support the constitution and the government by King, Lords, and Commons, and exert their best endeavours to impress on the minds of those connected with them, a reverence for, and a due submission to, the laws which had hitherto preserved the liberty, protected the property, and increased the enjoyments of a free and prosperous people. The declaration was signed by more than eight thousand persons. Similar resolutions were adopted in other parts; but, in Manchester alone, a short scene of tumult took place, in the course of which the windows of Mr. Walker, a strenuous agent and supporter of the London societies, were destroyed*.

* Annual Register, 1792, Chronicle and Appendix.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTY-EIGHTH.

1792—1793.

Changes in parties—dismissal of Lord Thurlow.—Attempt to reconcile the members of opposition—its failure.—Situation of Mr. Pitt—he is made Lord Warden of the Cinque-Ports. Opening of the session of Parliament—King's speech.—Address in the Lords—moved by the Earl of Hardwicke—opposed by the Duke of Norfolk and other Peers.—Speech of the Duke of Clarence.—Marquis of Lansdowne proposes an amendment—address carried.—House of Commons—Question of Order by Mr. Jekyll.—Address moved by the Lord Mayor—seconded by Mr. Wallace—Lord Fielding—the Earl of Wycombe—Mr. Fox—Mr. Windham—other members.—Mr. Fox moves an amendment on the Report of the Address.—Mr. Fox moves for an embassy to Paris.—Lord Sheffield—other members.—Motion negatived.—Navy estimates.—Mr. Sheridan—Mr. Burke—Mr. Fox—Earl Gower's instructions laid before Parliament—unanimously approved.—Army estimates.—Mr. Fox mentions the dismissal of certain officers.—The Alien Bill.—Reasons given by Lord Granville.—Motion of the Marquis of Lansdowne—lost.—Debate on committing the Alien Bill.—On the third reading.—Debate in the House of Commons.—Bill committed—reported—opposed.—Mr. Fox moves a postponement.—Mr. Pitt.—Bill passed.—Bills respecting Assignats, and the exportation of arms and grain.—Christmas recess.—Secessions from the opposition party.—Public opinion.—Mr. Fox publishes a pamphlet.

BEFORE the meeting of Parliament, thus suddenly convoked, considerable changes had taken place in the state of parties and party connexions. Lord Thurlow,

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Changes in
parties.
Dismissal of
Lord Thurlow.
June 15.

so long the adherent of ministry, and so often the vigorous defender of Mr. Pitt and his measures, was no longer in office. He had not the grace, so often sought by politicians, of resigning; he was dismissed.

Lord Thurlow was a man of enlarged understanding and powerful mind; his eloquence was rather everpowering than persuasive, and the ruggedness of his manner gave an exaggerated notion of his ability, while it forbade a suspicion of his integrity or sincerity; but his temper rendered him uncertain and impracticable, and his general disposition to cavil and censure, made it impossible to anticipate his course, or rely on his assistance. The share he had taken in displacing the coalition party, and the zealous support he afforded to Mr. Pitt, in the early part of his administration, caused a belief that these two were animated by one spirit, uniform in their views, and inseparable in their course. Yet Mr. Pitt felt and declared that the Chancellor was a man who opposed every thing and proposed nothing; who would state all possible objections to an intended measure, without an intimation how they were to be removed or palliated. An instance occurred in his unforeseen opposition to the restoration of the forfeited estates in Scotland*; an opposition from which neither general good nor personal popularity could ensue. But, at the time of the King's illness, the Lord Chancellor shewed a disposition, not in unison with the supposed purity and inflexibility of his character, to desert the cause of his royal master, and to abandon the party of Mr. Pitt, if he could have been assured of retaining his office. This vacillation of mind was suspected, and not sparingly intimated, at the moment; but subsequent disclosures have placed the matter beyond all doubt. Progress had been made in the negotiation with him before the return of Mr. Fox from abroad; but whether his personal observation of the King's malady inclined him to expect his convalescence, or whether the firmness with which Mr. Fox supported the pretensions of

* See Chapter 57, vol. iv. p. 139.

Lord Loughborough to the great seal, in the event of a general change, or whatever else might be the cause, it is certain that his vehement and energetic declaration of attachment to his gracious master*, was uttered at a period when the Prince's friends hoped for great benefits from his co-operation. Such a negotiation could not be so secretly carried on as to prevent all intelligence from transpiring; and there is no reason to doubt that Mr. Pitt was accurately informed of all the material particulars; yet, when the strenuous and apparently spontaneous declarations of the Chancellor gave such strength to his cause, and when the King's recovery removed all political apprehension, he might have been content still to avail himself of Lord Thurlow's assistance, without examining too nicely the course of his conduct, or entering into criminatory discussions. The Lord Chancellor was not so amicably disposed. Although he supported Mr. Pitt's measures in Parliament, still, on some occasions, when it was neither necessary nor to be expected, he made attacks which could not be resisted or repelled. When the minister had announced an intention to subject tobacco to the laws of excise, and when endeavours were made to exasperate the public mind, among other objects, on the privation of the trial by jury, his lordship, charging a jury at a proceeding relative to a new coinage, called a trial of pix, took occasion to observe that so sacred was the trial by jury, that he trusted in God the people of England would always consider it as their indefeasible right; and that, under no pretence, either of revenue or of any other object, would this great safe-guard of their property be entrenched upon: an infringement of this right was an act for which the longest life of the most exalted minister could never atone†. The aim of these observations could not be mistaken; nor was the intent frustrated; for, in all parts of the town, bills were ex-

* See Chapter 64, vol. iv. p. 332.

† The Chancellor of the Exchequer gave his notice on the 16th, and the Lord Chancellor's charge was about the 24th of June, 1789.—Annual Register, vol. xxi. p. 230.

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hibited containing these expressions, and headed "Britons! attend to the voice of your Chancellor*!"

Convinced that, without more efficient and certain assistance, the public business could not be carried on in the House of Lords, Mr. Pitt obtained the elevation of Mr. Grenville to the Peerage†; and the repeated and more vehement opposition of the Chancellor shewed the necessity of such a measure. On a question relating to Indian finance, on the bill for increasing the efficiency of the sinking-fund, and on one for encouraging the growth of timber in the New Forest, his speeches against the measures of government were vehement and opprobrious‡. Difficulties increasing, and all attempts to mollify the Lord Chancellor failing, Mr. Pitt found it necessary to apprise him that he should intimate to his sovereign that both could not continue in the cabinet. The King did not hesitate in his choice, and the great seal, taken from Lord Thurlow, was put into commission§.

Attempt to reconcile the members of opposition.

From the time when Mr. Burke's declaration against the French revolution had drawn on him the censure and enmity of his late friends, the difficulty of maintaining a show of union among them had become apparent. A serious and most important schism had taken place between Mr. Fox and those who adopted the opinions of Mr. Burke. The great leaders, alarmed at the probable dissolution of their union, and the severance of many ties of personal as well as of political friendship, arranged a meeting for the purpose of endeavouring, by mutual concessions, to avert such an event. Proposals were made and debated with great warmth and ability; but the determined adherence of Mr. Fox to some principles which were deemed inconsistent with the British constitution, presented such obstacles, that the members separated, hopeless of ever

Its failure.

* From my own memory.

† November, 1790.

‡ Life of William Pitt, by John Gifford, vol. iii. p. 186, 8vo.

§ Tomline's Life of Pitt, vol. ii. p. 512; Moore's Life of Sheridan, vol. ii. p. 28; and Bishop Watson's Anecdotes of his own Life, vol. i. p. 359. The Commissioners were, Sir James Eyre, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas; Mr. Justice Ashhurst, and Mr. Justice Wilson.

appearing again as an united body*. The Duke of Portland and Earl Fitzwilliam in the upper, and Mr. Windham with a large party in the lower House, were consequently to be considered supporters of government.

Mr. Pitt's character may be considered as having, at this time, reached its zenith. Order, frugality, and judicious retrenchment, exempt from meanness, marked his financial course; firmness and vigour, not unallied with caution and prudence, distinguished his general measures; the love of popularity, which formed a reigning principle in his mind, never led him to sacrifice his own dignity, or hazard the safety of the state; and such was the ascendancy which his talents and virtues had acquired, that even the failures which in a few instances attended his career, did not diminish, in any considerable degree, the high estimation in which he was held. A few frivolous and injudicious taxes were imposed and repealed, without the expression of any great popular feeling; and even his greater failure, the Russian armament, passed away without any public desire to see him removed from office. Few serious attacks were made on him; the India bill, the regency, the extension of excise, and some other measures, which occasioned strong animadversions in Parliament, produced no effect dishonourable to the talent or public character of the minister. In fact, satirical poems, tavern songs, and a general raillery against his self-denial and chastity, were the chief weapons of assault wielded against him†; but they had little effect on the public mind, where a high estimate of his conduct and a dread of the ascendancy of his opponents maintained him in the pre-eminent possession of the love and confidence of his country.

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Situation of
Mr. Pitt.

* From the private information of a very eminent statesman, who was one of the individuals assembled, and took an active part in the discussion. Let it, however, be observed, that, in ascribing to Mr. Fox the views mentioned above, I am merely transcribing the words of the narrator. A judgment of Mr. Fox's principles can only be derived from a candid consideration of his conduct.

† A reverend divine has not disdained, in the course of a bitter invective, to avail himself of this topic; he could not for decency's sake expatiate too largely; but has conveyed his censure through the medium of Sir John Falstaff's description, in Henry the Fourth, part 2, act iv., scene 7, of Prince John of Lancaster. --Preface to *Bellendenus*. Translation, p. 58.

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He is made
Lord Warden
of the Cinque
Ports.

Aug. 6th.

Disinterestedness, a quality often appreciated too highly, distinguished him in an eminent degree; but, on the death of the Earl of Guildford, he had accepted the only reward he ever did receive for his public services, the office of Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, worth about three thousand pounds a-year. This appointment had long been considered as the just due of the prime minister for the time; but Mr. Pitt did not accept it, until he had received from his sovereign a letter, written, in his absence from town, to Mr. Dundas, in which his Majesty said, "I take the first opportunity of acquainting Mr. Pitt, that the wardenship of the Cinque Ports is an office for which I will not receive any recommendations, having positively resolved to confer it on him, as a mark of that regard which his eminent services have deserved from me. I am so bent on this, that I shall be seriously offended at any attempt to decline." At his first accession to power*, Mr. Pitt, as already has been mentioned, refused a lucrative post; but having now been prime minister nearly nine years, and having surrendered the chances of honourable emolument in his profession, and having expended the whole of his private fortune, in addition to his official income, he gratefully accepted this mark of his Majesty's condescending kindness and approbation; and the propriety of the appointment was never called in question†.

Dec. 13th.
Opening of the
session.

In opening the session, the King said, that, having found it necessary to embody a part of the militia, he had convoked the two Houses within the time limited by law. He regretted that he could not announce the secure and undisturbed continuance of the blessings derived from a state of tranquillity; vigilance and exertion were now required. Seditious practices had been more openly renewed, with increased activity; a

* See Chapter 56, vol. iv. p. 72.

† Tomline's Life of Pitt, vol. ii. p. 518, 519. The right reverend author mentions, indeed, one interested exception to the universality of approbation; but the anecdote is too personal to be worth recording. About the same time, Mr. Fox obtained, from the consideration of his friends and admirers, the means of extricating himself from pecuniary embarrassments, with which he had been much beset, and of enjoying, for the rest of his life the comforts of an independent fortune.

spirit of tumult and disorder had consequently displayed itself in acts of riot and insurrection, showing a design to attempt the destruction of the constitution, and the subversion of all order and government; a design evidently pursued in connexion and concert with persons in foreign countries. He had observed a strict neutrality in the war, and abstained from interference in the internal affairs of France; but he could not, without serious uneasiness, observe the strong and increasing indications in that country of an intention to excite disturbances in other states, to disregard the rights of neutral nations, and to pursue views of conquest and aggrandisement, as well as to adopt towards his allies, the States General (who had been equally neutral), measures neither conformable to the law of nations, nor to the positive stipulations of existing treaties. Under these circumstances, he had felt it his duty to take steps for augmenting his naval and military force, as necessary, and best calculated to maintain internal tranquillity, and by a firm and temperate conduct to preserve the blessings of peace. These measures would, for a time, retard the diminution of the national debt, and impede the further repeal of taxes; he was persuaded that Parliament would adopt all necessary measures for enforcing obedience to the laws, and repressing every attempt to disturb the public peace and tranquillity.

An address was moved by the Earl of Hardwicke, and seconded by Lord Walsingham. The mover observed, that he had once deemed a revolution in the government of France natural, and rejoiced in the hope that a beneficial constitution was likely to be formed; but such expectation had entirely vanished. We had abstained from all interference; but the disposition of France to pursue a system of conquest and aggrandisement was too obvious, from their having annexed Nice and Savoy to their territory; General Montesquiou's treaty with Geneva; their taking possession of Frankfort, and laying the inhabitants under a heavy contribution; he noticed also the invasion of the Netherlands, and the opening of the Scheldt, which

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Address in the
Lords moved
by the Earl of
Hardwicke.

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Opposed by
the Duke of
Norfolk and
other peers.

was a direct violation of the law of nations, and the rights of neutral powers.

The Duke of Norfolk, the Marquis of Lansdowne, Lord Rawdon, and Earl Stanhope, objected to the want of clear, explicit, and satisfactory disclosures, in the speech; and doubted whether the apprehension of invasion, or unknown riots and insurrections, afforded legal grounds for embodying the militia, and convening Parliament. Much disapprobation was expressed against the association at the Crown and Anchor. There was no necessity for associations; conspiracies had existed in the time of Queen Elizabeth, and numerous libels were published in those of James the First, Charles the Second, and Queen Anne; but no associations had been formed, neither were they counteracted by petty clubs and meetings.

Lord Grenville

Lord Grenville explained the power given to the Crown by the militia act; described the conduct of the seditious societies, and the reception of their addresses and missionaries by the National Convention. The King, he observed, in all transactions with foreign courts, was the representative of the people; but this prerogative was infringed by these addressers. He noticed, more particularly, two paragraphs, inserted in M. Condorcet's paper in Paris, asserting that the people of this country were determined to shake off hereditary succession, and to establish a convention as the only genuine organ of representation.

Lord Stormont.

Lord Stormont also cited from an elaborate address of the same author to the Dutch, or Batavians as he called them, these expressions: "So long as the earth is stained by the existence of a king, and by the absurdity of hereditary government; so long as this shameful production of ignorance and folly remains unproscribed by the universal consent of mankind, union between free states is their primary want, their dearest interest. George the Third sees, with anxious surprise, that throne totter under him, which is founded on sophistry, and which republican truths have sapped to its very foundation." His lordship added, that he was called upon, not by dislike

of one set of public men or preference of another, but by the duty of averting the danger which threatened the existing government and constitution of the country, to range himself under the broad banner of the constitution, to add one to the great phalanx that was to shield it from the poisoned arrows directed against it.

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His royal highness the Duke of Clarence also supported the address, observing, on the rapacity of the French, that as Savoy had been annexed to their dominions as the eighty-fourth department, if they conquered Holland, he supposed they would make that the eighty-fifth.

The Duke of
Clarence.

An attempt was made by the Marquis of Lansdowne to introduce an amendment; but, after a desultory conversation, it was negatived without a division and the address carried.

Marquis of
Lansdowne.

In the House of Commons, the address was debated with more vehemence, and the discussion was attended with some extraordinary circumstances. Before the King's speech had been read from the chair, Mr. Jekyll submitted to the House, as a matter of privilege, the question, "By what authority were they actually sitting? According to the established law and usages, Parliament could not be called together at an earlier day than that to which it had been last prorogued, and no prorogation could be for a shorter period than forty days; he wished to be informed where and when the insurrection had taken place, which alone could make the present a legal meeting, and its acts valid and binding."

House of
Commons.

Question of
order by
Mr. Jekyll.

Mr. Dundas answered this objection by a reference to the statute; and Mr. Fox, while he agreed in the legality of the proceeding, contended that they could not, upon principles of justice or common sense, transact any business, before they had investigated the truth of the proclamation.

Mr. Fox.

The Lord Mayor, who moved, and Mr. Wallace, who seconded, the address, dwelt chiefly on the boldness and perseverance of the seditious societies; the

Address
moved by the
Lord Mayor.

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insurrections in various parts of the kingdom, and the publications, so profusely disseminated, intended to effect a revolution on the French model. These societies sympathised in every thing with the French: their dejection, when the Duke of Brunswick was on his march to Paris, could be surpassed only by their extravagant joy when he was obliged to retreat.

Lord Fielding.

Lord Fielding, hitherto a member of the opposition, now announced his determination to support the ministers, and gave notice that he would speedily move for a bill to suspend the Habeas Corpus act, with respect to foreigners.

The Earl of
Wycombe.

The Earl of Wycombe declared, that as it was impossible for him to approve of what he did not understand, he could not give praise to ministers, or vote an address of thanks to the King, for what was either not within his knowledge, or beyond his comprehension. The speech calumniated the people of England; for the kingdom was at that very moment absolutely overflowing with loyalty. No cause for alarm existed in England; in Scotland, no hostile intentions were entertained against the King or the House of Lords; nor were the claims of the Catholics in Ireland unreasonable or inimical to the constitution. Foreign war could be justified by nothing short of an actual invasion; and if, in declaring that principle by the treaty of 1788, we were bound to maintain to Holland the exclusive navigation of the Scheldt, and to the Stadholder his privileges, more shame to those who entered into such an engagement. Should we unfortunately be forced into a war with France, who certainly had not provoked it by any act of hostility, or attempt to invade our territory, he did not see how we could make any impression. Having judged that a system of holding transmarine possessions was not wise or politic, she would not be solicitous to preserve her colonies; and persons of great ability doubted whether England would not be more powerful if freed from those incumbrances; relieved from the enormous expense of defending them. Our commerce with the

United States was more advantageous now than it was while they were part of our empire and defended at our expense.

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Mr. Fox.

These assertions and arguments were not calculated to produce much effect; but the debate received its impulse and character from an eloquent and luminous speech by Mr. Fox, combining all the excellence of that great orator in argument, persuasion, wit, and satire. Parliament, he said, was assembled at the most momentous crisis recorded in history; and on their conduct would depend not only the fate of the British constitution, but the future happiness of mankind. His Majesty's speech was full of assertions and insinuations calculated to create apprehensions on the safety of every thing justly dear to Englishmen. His confidential servants, who had advised him to deliver such a speech, were responsible for every letter of it, and to them, and to them only, was the observation addressed, that every fact which it asserted was false; every assertion or insinuation unfounded; the assertion of insurrections was a mere fiction; there had been some slight riots at Shields, at Leith, at Yarmouth, at Perth, and Dundee; but the only cause was that the sailors wanted an increase of wages; they never thought of overthrowing the constitution.

If the drooping and dejected aspect of many persons, when tidings of the supposed surrender of Dumouriez arrived, were a proof that men were discontented with the constitution of England, and leagued with foreigners in an attempt to destroy it, "I give myself up to the country," he said, "as a guilty man; for I freely confess that when I heard of the intelligence, and that there was a probability of the triumph of the armies of Austria and Prussia over the liberties of France, my spirits drooped and I was dejected. Could any man, who, loving the constitution of England, and feeling its principles in his heart, wish success to the Duke of Brunswick, after reading his manifesto. I confess that I felt sincere gloom and dejection; for I saw, in the triumph of that conspiracy, not merely the ruin of liberty in

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“ France, but the ruin of liberty in England; the ruin of the liberty of man.” “ On various pretexts there have been tumults and disorders; but the true design was the destruction of our happy constitution.” So says the speech; and mark the illustration of the Lord Mayor. “ There have been various societies established in London, instituted for the plausible purpose of merely discussing constitutional questions, but which were really designed to propagate seditious doctrines.” So, then, by this new scheme of tyranny, we are not to judge of the conduct of men by their overt acts, but, arrogating to ourselves the province and the power of the Deity, to arraign them for secret thoughts, and punish, because we choose to believe them guilty!

After many remarks on the societies complained of, and a vehement attack on that for preserving liberty and property, on Mr. Chairman Reeves, and on one of their publications, Mr. Fox adverted to the calling out of the militia. “ When I first heard of it,” he said, “ I felt great anxiety and consternation. I thought that information had certainly been received of some actual insurrection, or impending invasion; but when I heard that they were not called out to enable ministers to send an armed force to any distant part, to Ireland, or to Scotland, but that troops were assembling around London, I pronounced it in my own mind, and I here again pronounce it, to be a fraud. There are societies who have indulged in silly and frantic speculations, and who have published objectionable toasts and resolutions; but that there is any insurrection, or that any attempt was making to overthrow the constitution, I utterly deny.”

He would not agree with Lord Wycombe, that we should never commence hostilities unless attacked; but he wished a motion made to express disapprobation of entering upon war, if by any honourable means it could be avoided. No man should be deterred by the dread of being in a minority. A minority had saved this country from a war against Russia. When Spain provoked this country by an insult, which is a real aggression, all agreed on the necessity of the case; but we did

not go headlong to war; with becoming fortitude we averted it by an armed negotiation. We now disdained to negotiate, having no minister at Paris, because France is a republic; and thus were we to pay with the blood and treasure of the people for a punctilio! If the pretext were the opening of the Scheldt, it might be doubted that such a war would be undertaken even with the approbation of the Dutch. When the Emperor used such a threat, the French, even under their depraved old system, did not go to war, but prevented it by their good offices, and by a negotiation. Why have we not so interfered? Because, forsooth, France is an unanointed republic! Oh, miserable, infatuated Frenchmen! Oh, lame and inconsiderate politicians! Why, instead of breaking the holy vial of Rheims, why did you not pour some of the sacred oil on the heads of your executive council, that the pride of states might not be forced to plunge themselves and you into the horrors of war, rather than be contaminated with your acquaintance? How short-sighted were you to believe that the prejudices of infants had departed with the gloom of ignorance, and that states were grown up to manhood and reason.

Mr. Fox then put it seriously to the conscience and honour of gentlemen, to say whether they would not be aiding the object of republicans and levellers, if they should agree to plunge this country headlong into a war, or give any pledge whatever to the Crown, until they had ascertained whether there was an insurrection in their country or not? If ministers would confess the truth, they had assembled Parliament to atone for their want of vigilance. "This vigilant ministry," he said, "saw,—nay, hoped,—that France was on the brink of falling a sacrifice to the united force of Austria and Prussia, the two powers whose union would be the most dreadful to England; but saw no danger to England in a conquest which would render those great military powers maritime. They saw no danger in the union; nay, they had given away Poland in the mean time: thinking that, with Ockzacow, the balance of Europe was gone, they

“gave away Poland with as little compunction as honour, and with the unenviable certainty that their blustering was laughed at and despised in every court in Europe. Do they boast of their vigilance, and yet saw nothing of their present dread for Holland and Brabant on the thirtieth of September, when, to the joy of every man whose heart is warmed with the love of freedom, the Duke of Brunswick retreated before the armies of France? Were they vigilant, not to foresee the consequences of that retreat? or did they still flatter themselves with the weak, the false hope that the steadiness of men bred up in the trammels of tactics and discipline would be an over-match for the impetuosity of those who were animated by the glorious flame of liberty? If so, the battle of Jemappes ought to have shewn these vigilant men their error. It occurred on the sixth of November; on the same day the government of the Netherlands took to flight, and the news arrived in England on the tenth or twelfth. Now, what did these vigilant ministers? On the seventeenth, they prorogued Parliament to the third of January, without even saying that it was then to meet for the dispatch of business!”

If he were asked what he would propose to do in these times of agitation, he would take from the Dissenters their ground of discontent at being unjustly suspected and cruelly calumniated, by repealing the Test and Corporation Acts. If there were persons tinctured with a republican spirit, because they thought the representative government more perfect under such a form, he would endeavour to amend the representation, and shew that the House of Commons, although not chosen by all, should have no other interest than to prove itself the representative of all. If there were men dissatisfied in Scotland, Ireland, or elsewhere, on account of disabilities and exemptions, of unjust prejudices and of cruel restrictions, he would repeal the penal laws which disgrace our statute book: other complaints of grievances he would redress, where really proved; but, above all, would constantly, cheer-

fully, patiently listen : any man who felt, or thought he felt, a grievance, might come freely to the bar with his proofs, and, if he established his case, obtain redress. Instead of this, government said, suppress the complaint ; check the circulation of knowledge ; command that no man shall read ; or that, as no man under one hundred pounds a year can kill a partridge, so no man under twenty or thirty pounds a year shall dare to read or think ! He then noticed, with bitter censure, some proceedings of parochial meetings in Westminster ; the loyal paper called “ A Pennyworth of Advice ;” and the illegality of a magistrate interrupting the peaceable discussions of a debating society. Finally, although with the certainty, as he said, of opposing himself to the furor of the day, he moved an amendment, declaring that the House saw with anxiety and alarm those measures adopted by government which the law authorises only in cases of insurrection within the realm ; and that, being assembled, although in a new and alarming manner, they would make it their first business to inform themselves of the causes of this measure.

Mr. Pitt was not present at this debate, not being yet returned after vacating his seat by accepting an office under the Crown. Mr. Fox, in the course of his speech, had addressed his valued friends, those who, like Lord Fielding, were disposed to vote against him, in pathetic terms, entreating them to reflect on the consequences of their late delusion, and on the necessity of union, from their experience of the advantages it had produced.

He deprecates secession from his party.

How little was the effect of this appeal, was shewn, when Mr. Windham was the first to oppose the amendment. He was obliged to separate from those whose political sentiments, on almost every occasion, were in unison with his own : his attachments, in matters of less consideration, might have some influence on his judgment ; but, upon a subject so important as the present, he must be governed solely by a sense of duty. He could not agree with his right honourable friend in almost any sentiment he had expressed. The

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foundation of their difference lay in the question—“ Was the country at this moment in a state of danger, “ or not ? ” He was told that the only alarm that was felt had been created by government. Government must have had strange and wonderful powers indeed, to produce the alarm every day expressed. The whole country, every town, village, and hamlet, was filled with apprehension ; it occupied the whole attention of all ranks and descriptions of people. Speculative opinions had before been published ; but the manner as well as the works published of late were entirely new. Not from distrust or rumour, but of his own knowledge and from general notoriety, he averred that there had been, and still continued, a constant communication between persons in Paris and in London, for the destruction of our present form of government ; in every town, in every village, nay, almost in every house, they had their agents, who disseminated certain pamphlets gratis, and with the solemnity of an oath they bound themselves to be ready*. Great pains had been taken to wean the affections of the poorer part of the community from government ; and the plan was supported by a purse made in France. The publications were recommended to labourers ; the agents gained their affections by flattering their passions ; and then proceeded, as they termed it, to instruct. Of the combined armies that marched toward the capital of France, he believed the motives to have been good, and therefore wished them success ; but he should have done the same had their motives been bad : that which they opposed was worse than any consequence that could result from their success.

The axiom, that no country ought to intermeddle with the internal affairs of another, was true only in a limited sense. If the contests of two nations affected the interests of a third, she would have a right to interfere. But did France pursue only her own internal regulation ? Did she keep good faith in her

* At this point, the manœuvre which had been practised on Mr. Burke was essayed ; Mr. Windham was interrupted by cries of “ Prove ! prove ! ” but order was at length restored, and he proceeded.

decree, "That she abandoned for ever all ideas of fo-
"reign conquest?" She professed, indeed, good-will
to all mankind; but before a Frenchman could be
faithful, his nature must be changed. It was their
object to lower this country, and in that they would
persist to the last moment of possibility. Their cor-
respondence with the club of Manchester proved that
they would not hesitate to bring an army into the heart
of England, if they could do it with safety; but, in
fact, they did not so much depend upon themselves as
on their bullies in other countries. Thus, from all
circumstances, minute in themselves, but of the most
serious importance when combined, it would appear
that the alarm was not fictitious, but real, and that
ministers had acted rightly, even if they had erred in
point of form, in calling out the militia, and should
have his support.

Mr. Grey, in a speech more replete with pointed
invective than political argument, said that the danger
of the country arose, not from the combination of le-
vellers and republicans, who were neither numerous
nor formidable,—not from riots which had originated
in circumstances purely local,—not from any insur-
rection, the existence of which had been attached to
no particular spot,—but from the measures of minis-
ters, which had shaken the pillars of public secu-
rity, threatened commerce with fatal consequences
from a war, and introduced a practice hostile to the
principles of the constitution. Mr. Windham had not
made the distinction between alarm and danger, mis-
taking his own apprehensions for the peril of which
he was afraid. The profuse circulation of certain pub-
lications (but he denied their seditious effects) had
been the consequence of the means taken to suppress
them. On the twenty-first of May, a proclamation
had issued against seditious writings, which being par-
ticularly understood to aim at Paine's publication, great
curiosity respecting it had been excited. During the
summer, no prudent precaution had been taken; the
retreat of the Duke of Brunswick, which he, with Mr.
Fox, and every friend of freedom, considered as matter

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of joy and exultation, had indeed thrown them into confusion : still, however, they left matters to be regulated by chance ; nothing was heard, but of Mr. Pitt enjoying the sweets of his new office, and Mr. Dundas being in Scotland, reaping the fruits of his well-earned popularity. All at once, on the first of December, London was surrounded with troops ; the Duke of Richmond threw himself into that post of danger, the Tower ; an alarm was excited, of which neither the object nor the cause could be discovered. He could not allow that the opinions of an individual should be set above the laws ; and therefore thought that nothing but a specific cause could be admitted as a justification of those extraordinary measures.

Mr. Dundas.

Mr. Dundas, in vindicating the proceedings of government, compared the freedom of the press enjoyed in this country with that which had been achieved in France. What, in that country, would be the consequence to him who should dare to make a motion in favour of distressed royalty, or to publish any opinions inconsistent with the views of the leading party ? If discontents existed, the proper mode to appease them was the removal of grievances : but what conduct could be adopted when the complaint was not of any particular grievance, when the redress demanded was not to be accomplished by any partial remedy, but when the constitution itself was held out as a grievance, and its total subversion required ? It was stated that now was the time for the people to assert their own rights, and follow the example set them by France. The lower classes had been impressed with an idea of liberty and equality, taught to aspire at an equal share in the legislative government, upon the principle that one man was as good as another, and that there ought to be no distinction of claims, and an equal division of possessions : an agrarian law was familiarly talked of among them. Paine's work would never have been heard of in consequence of the proclamation, if the utmost art and industry had not been used to increase its circulation ; cheap copies were dispersed throughout the country, transmitted to every village, and even

into every cottage. As to the existence of alarm, he appealed to members returning from the country, who had opportunities of being acquainted with the state of the public mind, and stated the facts which had come to his own knowledge during the last six weeks which he had passed in Scotland. To shew that there was a systematical design to overturn the constitution, he noticed the formation and conduct of societies here; their correspondence and connexion with those of France; the reception of the delegates in the Convention, and their addresses to that body and to the clubs. Adverting to the difference between the professions and the acts of France, as shewn by their proceeding with respect to Savoy, Geneva, and the Netherlands, and by their opening the Scheldt, in defiance of ancient and modern treaties, even of those which France herself had guaranteed,—he said that, although he deprecated the calamities of war, there was an evil still more serious—the farther interposition of France, in concert with the discontented in this country, to subvert the constitution.

In justification of calling out the militia, he observed, that in a recent statute, the case of insurrection was added to those of invasion or rebellion; it was difficult to define what strictly constituted an insurrection; but he could consider what had passed at Yarmouth, Shields, Leith, and other places as nothing less. In Scotland, mobs had risen at Dundee, Perth, and Aberdeen. At Dundee, the first pretext of the disturbance related to meal; but soon shouts of “Liberty and equality!” were heard; with exclamations of “No excise! no King!” and they concluded with planting the tree of liberty. Upon this occasion the magistrates had been obliged to make application for the assistance of the military, a party of whom, at an instant’s warning, had crossed the Frith of Forth.

He would not discuss the state of Ireland, as that country had a legislature of its own; nor was he desirous of entering into the subject of Russia and Poland, otherwise than to observe, that if there had not been such a division in the House on the subject of the

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Russian war, Poland would have escaped her present fate.

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Mr. Sheridan.

Mr. Sheridan aided the cause of opposition more by the celebrity of his name, than the weight or cogency of his speech: indeed, it was not easy, after the powerful and splendid display of Mr. Fox, to add much on that side. He spoke highly of the attachment of the people to the constitution, and declared the imputation contained in the speech from the throne highly unjust; it was the crown preferring a bill of indictment against the loyalty of the people. The formidable band of republicans, said to exist in this country, were mere men in buckram. The manner in which the addresses from this country had been received by the Convention, certainly argued on their part bad dispositions, but was no proof of treacherous designs. He would vote for the impeachment of that English minister, who, for the purpose of re-establishing the former despotism in France, should spend one guinea or spill one drop of blood for the opening of the Scheldt.

Mr. Burke.

Mr. Burke considered this to be, indeed, a day of trial of the constitution. He made due acknowledgments of the talents and eloquence of Mr. Fox, but controverted his assertion, that the statement of the existence of an insurrection was a calumny on the country. He could compare the right honourable gentleman only to Cicero, and would ask him whether, when that great Roman orator affirmed in the senate, that there existed within the walls of Rome a conspiracy for burning and destroying it, he was guilty of a libel upon the whole people, or only upon Cataline and his associates? He contrasted the liberty really enjoyed in Great Britain, with the despotism which, under that name, was exercised in France: there, neither life nor property was secure; and, instead of one Bastile, a Bastile was erected in every parish. Who would wish the morals of the present legislators of France introduced into this country? What parent would wish his son to resemble a Marat, a Danton, a Robespierre, or copy the example of a Petion? Or, should he search the deepest recesses of hell, where

could he find a more complete model of depravity than Monsieur Egalité? After more observations of the same kind, he concluded by saying, that the real question now was, not whether we should carry an address to the throne, but whether we should have a throne at all?

Mr. Anstruther declared his resolution to vote for the address. Mr. Erskine vindicated the measures taken by the society, of which he was a member, for procuring a reform of Parliament, and made some reflections on the ministry and on Mr. Burke; and Mr. William Smith defended the French from the charge of distributing money for seditious purposes in this country, declared that the English constitution was the last on earth which they wished to alter, and accused Mr. Burke of intentional misrepresentation, in speaking as if the French government was in the hands of the promoters of the massacres in Paris. The Attorney-general and Solicitor-general shortly justified the proceedings of government respecting the trial of Paine, and the convening of Parliament.

In answer to an intimation, that it would be proper to withdraw the amendment, Mr. Fox declared that, after the sentiments which had been expressed, he considered unanimity impossible, and gave notice that he should propose an amendment upon the report.

A division was then taken, and the majority was nearly six to one*.

When the report was brought up, Mr. Fox moved another amendment, recommending a negotiation.

He spoke on this occasion in terms less guarded and measured than on the former night. Ministers, he said, far from deserving praise, merited impeachment. When they knew of a league formed against France, they should have interfered: France had justice completely on her side, and by a prudent negotiation with the other powers, we might have prevented the horrid scenes which ensued, and saved this country from its present situation. Thank God! nature had been true to herself; tyranny had been defeated,

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Other mem-
bers.

14th.
Mr. Fox moves
an amendment
on the Report
of the Address.

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and those who had fought for freedom were triumphant. France had disappointed the predictions of the gentleman who, looking into a map, could see only a chasm once called France, and treated the nation as having once been famous in war. France had been formidable under her monarchy, but was much more so now, from her freedom, the animating effects of which were beyond calculation. All the inhabitants of Europe, who felt any thing in the cause of liberty, sympathized with them, and wished success to their struggle with tyrants and despots. Military efforts on our part would be impeded by the state of Ireland, where millions were disfranchised; and what court could be elevated by the promises of our ministers, or intimidated by their menaces, after their conduct with respect to Russia? Nor were our allies to be depended on. To the Duke of Brunswick he applied the lines of Pope:

“ Ask why from Britain Cæsar would retreat?
Cæsar himself might whisper he was beat.”

On Prussia, notwithstanding our connexion, and on the Emperor, no reliance could be placed; and there was a party in Holland possessed of much power, who were disaffected to the Stadtholder, and could not approve of the war. By negotiation alone could the calamities of war be avoided.

Every hour of delay in this measure he considered a loss, and, in that persuasion, although without much hope of success, he would, on the morrow, move an address to treat with the executive government of France. He reminded the House that, although it was once fashionable to talk of “ a vagrant Congress,” of “ one Adams,” of “ Hancock and his crew,” England had, in the end, been obliged to acknowledge the sovereignty and independence of America. It had been asked, were we to receive an ambassador, reeking with the blood of innocent men, and perhaps even with that of their King? His answer was, that should the French proceed to extremities against that unfortunate monarch, he should consider it an everlasting

disgrace to their nation, and which every man must deplore; but still he could not think that we were therefore never to have any connexion with France. The cause of France was popular on the Continent; their enemies had neither honour or humanity. As a proof, he cited the case of the brave, but unfortunate Lafayette, whose treatment must provoke the indignation of every virtuous man in Europe; but he had always been a friend to liberty, and that was enough to excite their hatred.

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Mr. Sheridan, in seconding the motion, made a short speech; the sentiments of which were not in exact union with those of Mr. Fox. Peace, if peace could be obtained, he wished by all means; but if not, he should vote for a vigorous war; not one of shifts and scraps, of timid operation or protracted effort, but conducted with sufficient energy to evince to the world that the nation was fighting for its dearest and most invaluable privileges.

Seconded by
Mr. Sheridan.

As the motion was negatived, without a division, it is not intended to pursue methodically the course of argument followed by each speaker. Mr. Burke, assuming that France must not be allowed to open the Scheldt, and that she must also be induced by negotiation, or compelled by arms, thought it a very extraordinary way of effecting either purpose, to represent our internal situation as rotten and our allies not to be depended on. The first proposition he utterly denied; and the fidelity of our allies would not be confirmed by acknowledging the sovereignty and entering into negotiations with the new republic of France. Nor were we sure that the French would accede to reasonable terms; and yet, on this contingency, were we to renounce our present friends and leave ourselves entirely at the mercy of the French, from whom none expected mercy, without meeting disappointment; and we were desired to dispatch an ambassador at the very moment, perhaps, when the merciless savages had their hands red with the blood of a murdered king; thus giving sanction to an act which even barbarians would condemn, giving currency to the crime of re-

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gicide, and affording a preliminary to the murder of our own most excellent sovereign. At present it was only decreed that France was a republic; but of what kind had not been certainly determined. So Holland, Venice, Genoa, and other republics differed widely in their respective governments; but they were not regicidal republics; they had no confraternity with the seditious and disaffected in other states. France was the only republic, since the creation, that decreed fundamental principles of universal union, seduction, and confraternity. After a vindication of his own opinions, and some strong and pointed observations on the rights of man, and the mischievous application of the doctrine to the passions and feelings of the lower class, he exhorted gentlemen, who were disposed to countenance new doctrines in England, to take warning by the fate of the virtuous Duke de la Rochefoucault. Seduced by the arts of Condorcet, he had countenanced the Revolution; but not being able to countenance all its excesses, he was obliged to fly, and, in the midst of his own tenants, forced from his carriage, from between his mother and his wife, and in their presence savagely butchered!

Other
speakers.

Some severe observations were elicited from Mr. Adam, by an expression of Mr. Yorke, importing, that although the most brilliant eloquence and powerful talents might be found on the other side of the house, he would not look there for patriotism, moderation, or candour; and, in answer to Mr. Burke's question—what hope there was of success, should a negotiation be attempted—he said no man could tell; but, if it failed in producing a treaty, it would secure our success in war; it would unite every hand and heart in that inevitable calamity; while a conduct, which carried half the nation to war with unwillingness, would put a padlock on every sword and un-rudder every ship.

15th.
Mr. Fox moves
for an embassy
to Paris.

On the following day, Mr. Fox made his promised motion for an address, requesting his Majesty to send a minister to Paris to treat with the persons exercising provisionally the functions of executive government, touching such points as might be in discussion between

his Majesty and his allies and the French nation. He was labouring under a severe hoarseness, and his speech was but short. He acknowledged that, in the present disposition of the House, he did not expect much attention ; but his object was simply to declare and record his opinion that it was the true policy of every nation to treat with any existing government, without inquiring or regarding how that government was constituted, or by what means those who exercised it came into power.

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Mr. Grey having seconded the motion, Lord Sheffield, with much animation, reprobated the idea of sending a minister to France, the vilest of all nations, whose governors were a gang of robbers and cut-throats, with whom no treaties could be maintained. He did not know how soon the French might be called over into this country ; how soon our best men might be thrown into gaol, to be dragged from thence, in a popular phrenzy, and inhumanly butchered ; our women of rank, beauty and virtue, obliged to lie in prisons, upon straw, and be violated and murdered*. He was almost ashamed of the enthusiasm he had hitherto felt in favour of the right honourable mover.

Lord Sheffield.

Mr. Thomas Stanley also declared that he had attended to all that had fallen from Mr. Fox, for the last three days, with the utmost astonishment. He had denied those operations of sedition which were evident to the whole nation. Already a cry had been excited against tithes, against taxes, and even against monarchy itself. Similar opinions were expressed by Mr. Loveden and Mr. Frederick North, while Mr. Fox was defended by Mr. Michael Angelo Tayler and Mr. Grey.

Mr. T. Stanley.

Mr. Jenkinson censured the motion as an encroachment on the executive power, in which was exclusively vested the prerogative of negotiating and making peace or war. He adverted to the discontented persons among us in correspondence with the French ; but, although from their great activity they might be

Other
speakers.

Mr.
Jenkinson.

* In these opinions the noble lord coincided with his friend Mr. Gibbon.—See his Miscellaneous Works, vol. ii. p. 469, 472. 8vo. edition

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troublesome in time of peace, they might be tranquil or might emigrate in time of war; for that correspondence, which, by law, was not punishable now, would then be treason. He then observed on the time which had been selected for the present motion. "On 'this very day,' he said, 'while we are debating 'about sending an ambassador to the French republic, was the King to receive sentence, and in all 'probability it is the day of his murder! What is it 'that gentlemen would propose to their sovereign? to 'bow his neck to a band of sanguinary ruffians, and 'address an ambassador to a set of regicides, whose 'hands are still reeking with the blood of a slaughtered 'monarch.'"

Mr. Erskine.

Mr. Francis, having supported the motion, was followed by Mr. Erskine, who considered a refusal to send an ambassador on account of the disturbed state of France, was only to say, in other words, that on that account we had resolved on war. French principles could not, like the contagion of the plague, be introduced by one person. In deprecating the miseries of war, he quoted some eloquent passages from Dr. Johnson's pamphlet on the dispute relative to Falkland's Island, and denied the proposition which he said had been advanced in the King's speech and agreed to in the address, that the surplus, as it was called, would be sufficient to carry on the war, without a fresh imposition of taxes.

Master of the
Rolls.

The Master of the Rolls declared the motion to be most dangerous and pernicious. The learned gentleman who had been favouring the House with elaborate quotations, might have spared himself the trouble, as war or peace was not the question; but whether under all circumstances we should send an ambassador to Paris. Who would be the ambassador? Was the nation ready to expose any gentleman to the mortifying situation of being interrogated by the President of the Convention, whether he came from the King or the people? and, on his answering from the King, being dismissed with the reply, that they had nothing to do with kings, they had proscribed them.

Mr. Windham contended that, by recognizing the Republic of France, Britain would arm every subject against the powers that governed him ; a consequence as fatal to the future interests of the world as the retreat of the combined armies, which he deplored as the most fatal event that had ever occurred.

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Mr. Windham.

Mr. Whitbread argued that a time might come when we should be compelled to negotiate with those whom we now refused to acknowledge but as ruffians and assassins. There were ambassadors from several parts of Europe now in Paris, from Sweden, and he believed from our good ally, the Dutch. The heads of these men were still upon their shoulders, and he saw no danger to the British minister had he staid there after the dethronement of the French monarch. On the navigation of the Scheldt, Mr. Whitbread adopted the language of the French decree: " The course of " rivers belongs to all the countries through which " they flow ; such, at least, seemed to be the bountiful " dispensation of Providence ; but, perhaps, man might " know better."

Mr. Whitbread

Mr. Grant maintained, with great ability and learning, the right of Holland to control the navigation of the Scheldt, and the arrogance of the interference of France, which showed only their rooted contempt of existing order and moral obligation. They had not conquered the Netherlands ; by their own declaration they had only restored the sovereignty of the people. Should France, then, be suffered to arrogate to itself the umpirage of all disputes in Europe ? Were we to settle the dispute with the present executive council, their successors, armed with the natural, imprescriptible rights of man, would deny their right to settle it. What ! they would exclaim, bind by treaty the rights of man ? It is impossible ; nature forbids it ; right is paramount to treaty. Those with whom you negotiated exceeded their power, and betrayed their constituents, and the contract is therefore void.

Mr. Grant.

Mr. Burke, after an animated eulogium on Mr. Frederick North, Mr. Jenkinson, and the other young members, who had gloriously stood forward to resist

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the growing evils, made a reflection on Mr. Erskine, for having produced from the writings of Dr. Johnson a good common place against war, while it had perhaps escaped his memory that this eminent author had summoned all his vigour and eloquence in vindication of a civil war; and, on the evil designs now manifested by a certain description of men, too bold to be mistaken or passed over in silent contempt, heightened the picture drawn by the Master of the Rolls of the awkward predicament in which an ambassador sent by us would be placed, by delineating the effect which would be produced in a commission, styling "George the Third, by the grace of God;" the shouts of laughter, the rage of the President, Robespierre and Marat, sworn enemies to kings, and the indignation which citizen Frost and citizen Paine would not fail to excite. Perhaps, even now, the barbarians were embruing their hands in the blood of their unhappy prisoners. Instead of the Scheldt, these wretches navigated the Styx only; and announced slaughter and destruction to all mankind. It might perhaps be sarcastically asked, how Citizen Franklin, with whom Citizen Paine was formerly intimate, came to be acknowledged as an ambassador, and why he (Mr. Burke) connived at such a degradation? The answer was obvious: Franklin had never advised the extirpation of all kings. When the independence of America was acknowledged, all Franklin's crimes were absolved. During the American war, we heard of no acts of barbarity, no deliberate murders, no dethronement and decapitation of kings. There had appeared more atrocious guilt in France in one day than in America and England in seven years.

Mr. Courtenay

Availing himself, not unfairly, of the allusion to Dr. Franklin and the American war, Mr. Courtenay referred to Mr. Burke's sentiments and conduct during that contest. Could he forget his prayers for the success of the American arms? Could he forget his enthusiasm in favour of republicanism? Was his memory so frail and fleeting that he could not remember how he wept over the fate of the rebel Montgomery—how he exulted in the victories of the rebel

Washington? Was it so treacherous, that he could not remember his complaint against the imprisonment of Mr. Laurens, the chief magistrate of the greatest republic in the world? In much worse taste, he made sarcastic allusions to the "age of chivalry," and the eulogy on the unhappy Queen, and described with the enthusiasm of a devoted partizan, the public spirit prevailing in France, her victories, her aggrandizement, and his raptures at the expulsion of the Duke of Brunswick and his disciplined ruffians.

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In a better vein, Mr. Sheridan made some allusions to the absence of Mr. Pitt, and Mr. Burke's appearance, for the first time, on the treasury bench. On what grounds, he asked, did the friends of government regret the absence of their usual leader? Had there appeared any want of numbers or ability among them? What exertion that the minister could have furnished had been unsupplied? Had there been any want of splendid and sonorous declamation to cover a meagreness of argument? Any want of virulence of invective to supply the place in proof in accusation? Any want of inflammatory appeals to the passions where a resort to reason and judgment was unsafe? Unquestionably, in all these respects, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not been missed. A recommendation, that before we plunged into war an attempt should be made to settle, if possible, the matter in dispute by negotiation, had been received with an incredible heat; but, in fact, the moment was unfortunate. Intelligence was expected of a catastrophe in France which all human hearts deprecated and would equally deplore; in this temper, therefore, the public mind was worked up to a blind and furious hostility, and the dearest interests of our own country were to be risked at the call of a momentary enthusiasm, which, if not bottomed on sound policy and sound sense, was sure not to be lasting. It seemed to him that arguments and instigations had been used to rouse the House to hostility, not for the sake of keeping faith with our allies, preserving Holland, or resenting the incendiary decree of the Convention; but of avenging all the

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outrages committed in France; reinstating, if possible, all that had been overthrown; exterminating the principles which were reprobated, and the people who preached them. He then descanted in animated terms on that hateful outrage on the rights and feelings of human nature, that wretched tissue of impotent pride, folly, and inhumanity, the Duke of Brunswick's proclamation, which he asserted had sharpened the daggers of the assassins of September, and whetted the axe now suspended over the unfortunate monarch. Contrary to all experience and truth, he maintained that the French had been uniformly partial, and even prejudiced, in favour of the English. What manly sense, what generous feeling, communicating with them, might have done, and above all, what fair truth and plain dealing might have effected, he believed it was not easy to calculate; but the withholding all these from that nation, in our hollow neutrality, was an error which would be for ever lamented.

Mr. Dundas.

Mr. Dundas briefly vindicated the conduct of government, putting the question before the House on this issue. If, under the former government of France, while ambassadors resided in both countries, the French government had received persons from England, complaining of the constitution, and proposing an alliance to subvert it, and given a favourable answer to such persons, what would have been the duty of our government? Would it not have been to recall our minister and order the French ambassador to quit this country? How, then, could we send an ambassador to France, when the French government had notoriously done the very same thing?

Mr. Fox.

Mr. Fox, scarcely audible through hoarseness, made a short reply, repeating, principally, the argument that, whether through necessity or success, a treaty must be resorted to, and rather despondingly vindicating the course he had taken and his motives. "I have done my duty," he said, "in submitting my ideas to the House. What have been my motives? Not to court the favour of ministers, or those by whom ministers are supposed to be favoured; not to

“ gratify my friends, as the debates in this House have
 “ shown—not to court popularity, for the general con-
 “ versation, both within and without these walls, has
 “ shown, that to gain popularity, I must have held the
 “ opposite course. The people may treat my house as
 “ they have done that of Dr. Priestley—as, it is said,
 “ they have more recently done that of Mr. Walker.
 “ My only motive was, that they might know what was
 “ the real cause of the war into which they are likely
 “ to be plunged—that it depended on a matter of mere
 “ form and ceremony.”

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Consistently with these feelings, he did not require a division, and the question was negatived.

Motion nega-
tived.

When the report on the navy estimates was brought up, and a resolution moved for increasing the number of seamen and marines by nine thousand men, Mr. Sheridan expressed his entire concurrence, and said he should have done so had the number required been forty, instead of twenty-five, thousand. He admitted the necessity of an armament; and if, unfortunately, we must enter into a war, he hoped it would be commenced with the exertion of every nerve of the empire, and conducted with an energy that might convince all Europe, that, when compelled to endure that calamity, we were determined to pursue it, not in a lingering and protracted, but in a decisive, manner. Still, he thought the prospect of peace was not definitively closed. He continued to think that we ought to negotiate: and had that policy been adopted, it might have led to the prevention of a catastrophe, which every man in the kingdom not only feared, but would deprecate, as wicked, unjust, and abominable.

20th.
Navy esti-
mates.

Mr. Sheridan.

These observations, for no motion was made, occasioned Mr. Burke to remark that he was not one who looked up to the leaders of the revolution in France for justice, magnanimity, or mercy; particularly when they charged their King, as a criminal, for offences for which that House would not call the meanest individual in the country to their bar to answer. In truth, he was in the custody of assassins, who were both his accusers and his judges, and his destruction was inevitable.

Mr. Burke

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Mr. Fox.

Mr. Fox declared that the catastrophe alluded to would be an act of gross and foul injustice, cruelty, and pusillanimity. The question before the House had his hearty support, and with equal alacrity he would have voted for forty thousand seamen; he was as eager as any man for an armament; it was indispensably necessary from the situation of the Continent. Nor did he see with an indifferent eye the progress of the French arms; he felt it to be alarming to Europe, and was under considerable concern for the effects it might have on this country. He wished for negotiation, but he was not willing that we should even negotiate unarmed.

Mr. Pitt.

Mr. Pitt, being now returned to the House, said, that if peace could be preserved, consistently with national honour, good faith, our own internal security, and the safety and interest of all Europe, it would not be broken; but upon any other terms peace would be but nominal, while its blessings would, in reality, be sacrificed. On the part of ministers, nothing would be omitted that had an honourable tendency to avert war; but much more had on that day been done, than ministers by themselves could have effected. It had been asked, in what way should we intimate the unanimous sentiment of the people of England? An ambassador was unnecessary; the King, as the representative of his people, having already, by his ambassador, declared them; those who most admired the French revolution had made the same declaration; their sentiments, no doubt, would be communicated in the usual channels; and of the sentiments of the other part of the nation, it was impossible that a doubt should be entertained. If some formal mode was desired; if an entry should be made on the Journals, for the purpose of handing down to posterity a solemn protest by this country against that event which would be dreadful to humanity, repugnant to justice, to France eternally disgraceful, and to the world detestable; if it was the wish of that House to state the universal and unanimous execration and abhorrence which such an event would create; the mode was easy; they could address

his Majesty for the declaration of his ambassador on quitting Paris; and by an unanimous vote profess their full and hearty concurrence in that declaration, and the abhorrence and detestation with which they should see any act against the personal safety of the King or his family.

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On the following day, the instructions given to Earl Gower, after the events of the tenth of August*, were communicated to the House. In them it was stated that his Majesty learnt with the deepest concern the height to which the distractions in Paris had been carried, and the deplorable consequences to which they had led, which were doubly affecting, from the regard which his Majesty felt for the persons of their Most Christian Majesties, and his interest in their welfare, as well as from the wishes which he formed for the tranquillity and prosperity of a kingdom with which he was in amity. Under the present circumstances, as the exercise of the executive power had been withdrawn from his Most Christian Majesty, his present credentials could be no longer available; and, on this account, as well as in conformity with the principles of neutrality hitherto observed, it was most proper that Earl Gower should no longer remain at Paris. "In any conversations," the instructions added, "which you may have occasion to hold, previous to your departure, you will take care to make your language conformable to the sentiments which are now conveyed to you; and you will particularly take every opportunity of expressing that, while his Majesty intends strictly to adhere to the principles of neutrality, in respect to the settlement of the internal government of France, he, at the same time, considers it as no deviation from those principles, to manifest, by all the means in his power, his solicitude for the personal situation of their most Christian Majesties, and their Royal Family; and he earnestly and anxiously hopes that they will, at least, be secured from any acts of violence, which could not fail

21st.
Earl Gower's
instructions
laid before
Parliament.

* Dated August 17th.

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Mr. Pitt.

“ to produce one universal sentiment of indignation
“ through every country of Europe.”

This paper having been read, Mr. Pitt claimed for its contents the assent of every British heart. What then must be their sentiments, when cruelties had been exercised, when a spirit of the utmost barbarity had been displayed, and nothing remained in prospect but that dreadful consummation which could not fail to excite universal horror and indignation. The only difficulty that occurred to him was, in what terms that House could suitably express itself. Considering the unanimity which prevailed, he had, at first, thought that the best mode would be by a vote, which might reach the whole of Europe, the influence of which should extend to France, and might, perhaps, there produce the desired effect. But a doubt had occurred, from a reflection that, as the House in giving their vote must adopt strong and indignant terms, the national pride and jealousy of France might be alarmed, and the people hurried on to the commission of the very crime which it was intended to prevent. It therefore appeared to him a better mode, simply to allow the paper to remain on the table, which would fully imply their concurrence in the expression of his Majesty's sentiments.

Mr. Fox.

Mr. Fox approved the proposal. The proceedings against the unhappy King of France were not only unnecessary, but highly unjust and repugnant to all the common feelings of mankind, and all the fundamental principles of law, which declared that although subsequent laws might be adapted to crimes, persons should be tried only according to those in being at the time of committing the imputed acts.

Instructions
unanimously
approved.

Mr. Windham, Mr. Sheridan, and Mr. Burke, shortly expressed their concurrence, and the motion was carried.

24th.
Army
estimates.

When the army estimates were produced, Mr. Fox, while he denied that the increase was wanted on account of internal commotions, admitted that the general posture of affairs with reference to foreign powers required strength on the part of the executive

government; but he wished to call attention to a matter highly important to the military service, and interesting to the community. He acknowledged the prerogative of the Crown to make appointments in the army; but that, like every other prerogative, was given for the benefit of the people, and the exercise of it subject to examination. He alluded to the dismissal from the service of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Lord Semphill, and Captain Gawler; the first two for entering into a subscription for supporting the French against the combined armies; the other, for refusing to withdraw his name from the society for constitutional information. He made no motion, and the conversation which followed produced nothing complimentary to the officers or in condemnation of the ministers.

In the mean time, Lord Grenville had produced in the House of Lords a bill for establishing regulations respecting aliens. Its chief enactments were, that on the arrival of any vessel, a written declaration should be delivered to an officer of the Customs, containing the name, rank, occupation, and description of every foreigner on board; and they were not to import arms, except as merchandize. Those who had been prohibited by the King in Council were not to land without express permission, nor were any to depart without a passport. The secretary of state was empowered, by warrant, to expel aliens from the kingdom, and the King to restrain their residence. Housekeepers, when required by a magistrate, were to give a description of aliens residing with them; and these were to render an account of all arms, gunpowder, and ammunition in their possession, of which the magistrate might deprive them, if he thought fit; and the secretary of state might issue warrants for searching their dwellings. All these enactments were enforced by severe penalties, extending even to transportation*.

The vast influx of foreigners, Lord Grenville observed, in consequence of the distractions on the Con-

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Mr. Fox mentions the dismissal of certain officers.

19th.
The Alien
Bill.

Reasons
given by
Lord
Grenville.

* See 33 Geo. III. c. 4.

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21st.
Motion by the
Marquis of
Lansdowne
for a negotia-
tion in favour
of the King
and the emi-
grants.

tinent, had excited no small alarm and apprehension in the minds of ministers. By virtue of his prerogative, the King might dismiss suspicious foreigners from his dominions; yet, as the power had not been exercised to that extent for a long period, it was almost obsolete, and required revival.

As matter of course, the bill was read; but, on the motion for a second reading, the Marquis of Lansdowne said, that about a month ago the number of emigrants in this country amounted to nearly eight thousand; their resource was in our humanity and generosity, and as the expense of supporting them was nearly a thousand pounds a week, the benevolence of individuals must soon become inadequate to the daily increasing claims. He had heard, with much approbation, that ministers contemplated sending these refugees to the western parts of Canada, with grants of land and powers to form settlements; before any such measures was resolved on, the disposition of the ruling powers in France toward these unfortunate persons should be tried. Possibly they might consent to receive them back, or contribute to their support in exile. To solve this question, and attempt to avert the impending fate of the King, we might send a minister to Paris to treat. In behalf of Louis every nation ought to interpose its good offices; but England above all, because the French had been encouraged to bring him to trial by the precedent established in the unfortunate and disgraceful case of Charles the First. The French entertained an high opinion of our judgment, justice, and honour, and we should not be called upon to engage in hostilities; for, by a letter from Holland, he was informed that the Dutch, not considering the question on the Scheldt of sufficient consequence to make them incur the hazard of a war, had determined not to call upon England for assistance. He gave reasons, both financial and political, to shew that Austria and Prussia would not persevere in war, which was to be supported by the expenditure of treasure at so great a distance from home that its return was scarcely possible, a contest which they could

not prosecute without our millions, and they would never return from Germany to England. He therefore moved an address, praying that a minister might be sent to France to represent the King's feelings for the unhappy situation of Louis the Sixteenth, and the deplorable state of the refugees, and his Majesty's readiness to grant them lands in the western parts of Canada, if it should be judged expedient to preclude them from returning to their native country.

Lord Grenville expressed the horror he felt at hearing in that house the very language used by those who were heaping on their King every species of indignity. By them he was merely styled "Louis the Sixteenth," an appellation, purposely meant to point out the man as distinct from the kingly office and dignity; but he trusted that their lordships, duly regarding their own honour and that of their country, would not adopt such language. He then exposed the futility of the proposed mission; and, as to the news from Holland, without pretending to appreciate the value of the noble Marquis's correspondence, he could say, that as a minister of this country he had received no such intelligence.

Some unimportant observations ensued, and the motion was abandoned.

On the motion for committing the alien bill, it was opposed by the Marquis of Lansdowne, as a suspension of the habeas corpus act, which ought not to be effected without evidence.

When the third reading was proposed, the Earl of Guildford founded, on this suggestion, a motion for rejecting the bill. He was supported by the Marquis of Lansdowne, who referred to all the topics which had engaged the attention of Parliament during the session, declaring the bill unnecessary, as there were not in the country above eighteen or twenty persons of the dangerous description to which it alluded.

He was answered by Lord Loughborough, who denied the measure to be new or extraordinary; and described the change which had taken place in the conduct of the promoters of sedition, from the time when the proclamation and the success of the allies

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Lord Grenville

Debate on the
alien bill.

26th.
On the third
reading.

Lord Lough-
borough.

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excited their fears and depressed their spirits, to the moment when the tide of war, turning in favour of the French, restored their courage, and elated their hopes. His lordship described the horrible massacres which these men verbally condemned, but afterwards sent embassies to congratulate the National Convention on their success; and even to promise the assistance of numbers here who would rise in their cause, and who, in return, expected their fraternal aid to overturn our constitution. Nor was this tone or conduct changed when the French avowedly despised the Christian religion; when professions of atheism had been made, and the existence of a God denied in full Convention, and the blasphemy received with applause. The sanctity of the seventh day had been abolished; and the relation of parent and child, the claim to protection from the one, and of honour from the other, being annulled. Robbery, murder, and licentiousness, not only went unpunished, but were encouraged as meritorious. False testimony was a proof of patriotism; and an universal breach of the tenth commandment was the first principle and foundation of their state.

A noble lord had spoken of the supposed number of French emissaries here as not exceeding eighteen or nineteen; in the disgraceful riots of 1780, the whole number originally engaged was not above three score. In the late horrible massacres in Paris, there were not more than two hundred persons employed, in a city containing more than six hundred thousand inhabitants, with thirty thousand men under arms; surely then their lordships would not think lightly of nineteen persons armed with daggers, and animated with the cry of "No King." There were two classes of Frenchmen in this country: one, driven by necessity to take refuge; they should, of course, be treated with tenderness and humanity: another, who came for the purpose of using all their efforts to create confusion; they were the proper objects of this bill.

The motion was negatived without a division.

In the House of Commons, the second reading of the bill was moved by Mr. Dundas, who, having given

28th.
In the House
of Commons.
Mr. Dundas.

a brief recapitulation of its clauses and a short analysis of its contents, observed, in anticipation of a probable requisition of evidence, that if he were called upon to state the grounds upon which he had founded his allegations, he would decline entering into any detail, appealing to the general sense of the House to determine how far they were well founded. As this bill was grounded on suspicion, and authorized the executive government to act upon that principle, it would be impossible, with any degree of propriety, to lay open the particular sources of information.

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Sir Gilbert Elliot, supporting the motion, entered into a vindication of the conduct pursued by himself, the Duke of Portland, and others, in quitting their former political alliance and joining the minister; and the debate turned almost entirely on this point.

Sir Gilbert
Elliot.

Mr. Fox alluded to Mr. Burke, as having condemned his former friends to banishment in Sinope; in answer to which allusion, Mr. Burke said that the phalanx had sent him, not to Sinope, but, in the common phrase, to Coventry. The endeavours that had been used to make him odious to the public, and to his private friends, all the world knew; yet this Sinopian, this dog of Athens, had not barked from his tub. He had violated no principle, he had betrayed no secret, he had not attempted to come between the resolution and the act.

Mr. Fox.

Mr. Burke.

Any person, who had seen the French business in the bud, and who now saw it full blown and nurtured, and yet still wished to maintain any connexion between France and this country, must, in every respect, meet with his entire disapprobation. How much, then, must he be surprised when he heard a great statesman declare that he rejoiced in the defeat of the Emperor, the ally of this country, and the King of Prussia; connected with it by marriage and by treaty; and all this because they were despots, and France a republic.

If, as had been said, there were not above nineteen persons in the kingdom likely to be affected by the bill, when it was considered that they were murderers and atheists, the number might be said to be very

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great; they exceeded, by many, the whole Royal Family, whom they might, perhaps, be commissioned to assassinate. Three thousand daggers had been bespoke at Birmingham by an Englishman, of which seventy had been delivered. It was not ascertained how many were to be exported, and how many were intended for home consumption. (Here Mr. Burke drew out a dagger which he had kept concealed, and, with much vehemence of action, threw it on the floor*.) "This," said he, pointing to the dagger, "this is what you are to gain by an alliance with France: wherever their principles are introduced, their practice must follow. I vote for this bill, because I consider it the means of saving my life, and all our lives, from the hands of assassins. I vote for it, because it will break the abominable system of the Pantheon, and prevent the introduction of French principles and French daggers."

31st.
Bill committed1793.
January 4.
Reported.

Opposed.

Supported.

Mr. Hardinge.

As Mr. Fox had announced his intention to reserve his particular objections for another stage of the bill, very few observations were made on the motion that it should go into a committee; but, on bringing up the report, a long and diffuse discussion took place. The opposition was conducted by Mr. Michael Angelo Taylor, the Earl of Wycombe, and Major Maitland. Their arguments turned chiefly on the impropriety of war, and the absence of all just cause of alarm. Lord Beauchamp supported the bill in a short speech, and Mr. Hardinge entered into a long and luminous vindication. If the law should operate in restraint and punishment of the emissary of atheism and sedition,—if it should punish or exclude the leveller in principle, who was an incendiary at heart,—it would fall where it should; whether it found him with or without a dagger in his hand, with or without French money or French paper in his pocket, it would find him at least with French principles in his head—principles of rebellion against all government,—and an avowed and boasted contempt of every oath of allegiance. On the

* In this action, Mr. Burke shewed some awkwardness, which afforded a copious theme to the writers of paragraphs and the designers of caricatures.

subject of libels, he quoted a powerful and eloquent passage from the prose works of Milton. "In every church and commonwealth," (he said, and he was not sufficiently enlightened to disclaim the alliance of church and state) "it is of the greatest concernment to magistrates to look vigilantly how books demean themselves, as well as men—to imprison them,—to execute sharp justice upon them as malefactors; for books are not absolutely dead things; but they have a potency of life in them, to be as active as that soul was whose progeny they are: nay, they contain, as in a vial, the purest extract and efficacy of that intellect which bred them. They are as lively and as vigorously productive as the fabulous dragon's teeth, and, sown up and down, may spring up armed men."

Mr. Jenkinson having renewed many of the observations on political societies, particularly that for constitutional information, Lord Mulgrave said he could not apprehend danger from that very contemptible body; but when societies were formed under the specious title of "Friends to the Freedom of the Press," for the purpose of bringing the trial by jury into disesteem, he thought it was time to be alarmed; and this society had met for the avowed purpose of blaming twelve Englishmen for their verdict on oath against Thomas Paine. Adverting to Mr. Erskine's speech on the trial, and his subsequent appearance at their meeting, he acknowledged his great abilities, but rejoiced that his eloquence and labours for so many hours were not a match for the plain common sense of twelve honest men.

Mr. Jenkinson

Lord Mulgrave

Mr. Grey considered the bill equally defective in principle and objectionable in practice, forming, as it did, part only of a system which the present ministers had almost invariably pursued with regard to that House and the public; and he renewed all the complaints which had been made and discussed from the first day of the session. Were the bill to pass, how was the innocent to be distinguished from the culpable emigrant? Cases might occur in which men who

Mr. Grey.

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were friends originally to the revolution, and wished to see the ancient despotism destroyed, but who were friends to a limited monarchy, might be driven by this bill into another country, perhaps back again to their own, where inevitably they must suffer death ; and he named, as instances, Lafayette and De Puzy. He did not accuse ministers of bad designs, but was not willing to give so much power without necessity, and without responsibility.

Mr. Fox.

The Marquis of Titchfield, Mr. Windham, Mr. Thomas Grenville, and Mr. Mitford, defended the measure ; but, on the whole, the debate on both sides took a latitude which warranted the observation of Mr. Fox, that the question had been discussed in a manner so general, and so many extraneous topics had been introduced, that he must depart from the mode in which he had meant to treat it. Beginning, therefore, with the internal state of the country, he repeated and enforced the arguments and statements he had made in an earlier part of the session. On the danger apprehended from the diffusion of seditious writings, he said opinions were never yet driven out by pikes, and swords, and guns. Against them the militia was no defence. How, then, were they to be met, if they existed ? By contempt, if they were absurd ; by argument, if specious ; by prosecutions, if they were seditious. Could not ministers have prosecuted Paine without an army ? Was any apprehension stated that the trial would not be suffered to proceed in the usual course ? In another part of his speech, he bestowed a merited eulogy on Mr. Erskine, for his firmness in not shrinking from the defence of Paine. The preamble of the bill, he said, was a complete delusion. Had such a mode of conduct been resorted to at the revocation of the edict of Nantes, it would have deprived us of some of the best commercial advantages we now enjoyed. With respect to those emigrants who suffered for their attachment to the new constitution, he had heard it said, by a person of high rank, that if Lafayette were here, he ought to be sent out of the country. Was this to be endured ? Was it fit to

invest any ministers with such a power, merely in the hope that they would not abuse it? Some, he observed, had fled for fear of punishment, for being concerned in the dreadful massacre of the second of September; all men would wish to see them removed: but this was a sufficient ground only for a particular law. The horrors of that day ought not to be mentioned as the act of the French government, or the French people, for both disclaimed it; but to disclaim was not enough. That the crime was not prevented or followed up by striking examples of punishment, would be an indelible disgrace to Paris and to France. The prerogative of the Crown to send foreigners out of the kingdom ought not to remain in doubt. He did not believe in such a prerogative; if it existed, it was too dangerous to remain. If, on the other hand, it was a prerogative for the good of the people—unless, indeed, the word “people” was not expunged from our political dictionary—the good of the people being the only foundation that he knew for any prerogative, it was fit that it should be clearly defined and understood, either by an enacting or a declaratory law. After many more remarks on societies and the state of parties, he concluded by moving “that the further consideration “of the bill be postponed to that day three weeks,” in order, he said, to give time for inquiry into the grounds of the necessity alleged for adopting it.

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He moves a
postponement.

Mr. Pitt considered that Mr. Fox's objection came rather too late, after four or five discussions had already taken place, more especially with respect to a bill in its nature urgent, and which ought to be passed immediately, if at all. It was founded on facts of notoriety, and the most evident deductions of reasoning. If, by some extraordinary occurrence, some unforeseen and inevitable calamity of nature, great numbers of foreigners were cast upon this country, without means of subsistence, purposes of commerce, or possibility of discrimination, he should consider even that as affording a sufficient object of jealousy and attention; but when it appeared they came from a country whose principles were inimical to the peace and order of every

Mr. Pitt.

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other government; and although many might have fled for refuge from the sword of persecution, yet if there was reason to suspect, that among these had mingled emissaries seeking for prey, a due regard to our own interests and the safety of the country, enforced the necessity of peculiar vigilance. Mr. Pitt then adverted to the principles promulgated by the French government, and the evident design of overthrowing that of England. Notwithstanding the general sentiment of the country, his opponents had the hardihood to treat all alarms as the effect of ministerial artifice. Had ministerial artifice made those who had hitherto acted upon a system of opposition, now concur in the opinion of this danger? Had it made all the members in that House, except ten or fifteen, agree in the same sentiment? Had ministerial artifice excited one general opinion throughout the country with respect to this danger? The opinions favoured by France were professed through interest inflamed by passion, and propagated by delusion, which recent successes had carried to the utmost height, rendering them still more dangerous.

Bill passed.

There was no division on Mr. Fox's motion, and the bill passed.

Bills concern-
ing assignats,
and the export-
ation of arms
and grain.

Before the introduction of the alien bill, three other measures were enacted, which, although they materially affected the views, the interests, and the feelings of France, occasioned no discussion in Parliament. The first prohibited, under a penalty, not exceeding twenty pounds, the circulation of assignats; the second enabled government to prohibit by proclamation, or order in council, the exportation of arms, ammunition, and naval stores; and the third was for indemnifying all persons who had acted in pursuance of an order in council, in preventing the exportation of grain and flour to France.

1792.

Nov. 9.

Secessions
from the oppo-
sition party.

The alien act was the last business which engaged the attention of Parliament until after the Christmas recess; and it is necessary now to interrupt the narrative of their proceedings, to record some contemporary events, which materially influenced the late debates, and which determined the future condition of the two

nations. Great effect had been produced by the late conference of the opposition party ; many of the highest and most ornamental members had not only separated from the great leaders, but openly and vigorously opposed them. In the upper house, the Duke of Portland, Earl Fitzwilliam, Earl Spencer, the Earl of Carlisle, and Lord Loughborough ; in the lower, the Marquis of Titchfield, Sir Gilbert Elliot, Mr. Windham, and many other distinguished individuals, may be numbered, while not one member of either house could be counted as a proselyte to the opposition party. These separations were not accompanied with any portion of the contumely or bitterness which had been displayed toward Mr. Burke. Mr. Fox mentioned the Duke of Portland, as a nobleman in speaking of whom he could not express his feelings, and mentioned, in terms of great affection, their acquaintance of seventeen years, ten of which had been passed in habits of the greatest intimacy. Of Mr. Windham he said, that to the soundest heart he joined the clearest head ; and while no man possessed more honourable principles, few, very few, could boast of an understanding so comprehensive, vigorous, and acute. On the following day, Mr. Windham, with equal courtesy, treated on the merits of his new opponent. To any measure which proceeded, he said, from him, it was not without the greatest anxiety that he refused his assent ; what his judgment was, every one knew ; how pure his motives, how eminent his integrity, it would be as impertinent in him to maintain, as it would be in any one to waste the time of the House in discussing positions that were acknowledged by all mankind. However wide, therefore, present difference might be, he was persuaded that it was only that species of difference which exists between two persons beholding the same object from two distinct points of view. He was persuaded that it did not extend to principle. Sir Gilbert Elliot and Mr. Fox announced their difference with equal feeling and liberality ; but it would be the height of error to suppose that these declarations and senti-

December 28.

14th

15th.

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1792.

Public
opinion.

ments would affect the conduct of the parties when permanently placed in the ranks of natural opposition. The modes of political conflict do not admit of that forbearance which should distinguish the placid interchange of differing opinions among friends; they who come into the arena with the intention only of thrusting and parrying with the foils of the fencing school, will speedily find that they receive and return assaults with instruments "unbated and envenomed."

In the existing state of public opinion, the condition of the opposition party was not calculated to augment their popularity or their influence. The kingdom at large felt heartily the sentiments which had occasioned the proclamation, and viewed the military events on the Continent as threatening, in the highest degree, to the interests of their country; the audacious declarations of the National Convention as direct menaces against all our political and social establishments; and they viewed the proceedings with respect to the Royal Family of France with the horror due to their savageness and the disgust appropriate to their meanness. How then must they contemplate the contrast between the glowing exultation displayed on the successes of the French arms, and the frigid expressions of disapprobation of the barbarous massacres, the avowed contempt of treaties, the renunciation of religion, and the proceedings against the King? Even when the progress of those proceedings produced expressions of censure more decided, they were limited to the acts alone; the causes were left without blame, and the consequences were treated as not demanding any permanent feeling of resentment. Thus the French were told, that although their cruelty toward their King and his family were not justifiable, still there were hearts and minds in England which could celebrate with joy their progress in arms, without bestowing much thought on a course of crime, accompanied with an avowal of motives calculated to arouse the feelings and the fears of all mankind. The speeches of opposition furnished topics by which the regicides of France

justified their course, and it could occasion no wonder if those who supplied them were reckoned among their most devoted partizans*.

Sensible of the effect to be expected from his late efforts, and not unconscious of a diminution of his popularity, Mr. Fox wrote, and published as a pamphlet, "A Letter to the Electors of Westminster," in which he recapitulated, without any addition of facts, or any variety of illustration, the arguments he had used on the measures hitherto discussed. As a political essay, it was not equal to the speeches which were made by him, and reported through the ordinary means; for it wanted the vigour, the fire, the felicity of illustration, the controlling passion, and the vivacity of sarcasm, which distinguished those powerful and impressive displays; while, as a literary composition, far from rivalling the splendid efforts of Burke, its praises must be confined to an acknowledgment of the correctness of its style, and the judicious method of its arrangement. It produced no effect, hardly gaining the compliment of two or three answers; but no public meeting was called, no petition proposed, no conspicuous effort made to give force to the attempt, or sanction to the sentiments of the writer†.

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Mr. Fox
publishes a
pamphlet.

* The speeches in Parliament are detailed in this, and will be in a subsequent session, with more than usual minuteness, to shew the conduct upon which public opinion was founded.

† See the pamphlet, published by Debrett in 1793, and a republication, with an application of its principles to subsequent events, by Robert Adair, Esquire, issued by Ridgway and Debrett in 1802. One passage in the pamphlet was, by some, affectingly quoted at the time, and should not therefore be omitted:—"Let us not attempt to deceive ourselves; whatever possibility, or even probability, there may be of a counter-revolution, from internal agitation and discord, the means of producing such an event by external force, can be no other than the conquest of France!!!—O! calumniated crusaders, how rational and moderate were your objects!—O! much injured Louis XIV. upon what slight grounds have you been accused of restless and immoderate ambition!—O! tame and feeble Cervantes, with what a timid pencil and faint colours have you painted the portrait of a disordered imagination!" On this effusion it is to be observed, that Mr. Fox does not treat the conquest of France as a proposition ever advanced by ministers or any party in the country; he raises it as an inference or supposition, runs it down, and in shouts of triumph celebrates its fall. But it is not easy to discover on what ground of general reasoning the idea of conquering France can be treated as more insane or Quixotic than that of conquering any other great and powerful country.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTY-NINTH.

1792—1793.

France.—Observation of Voltaire.—Treatment of the Royal Family.—Place of their imprisonment—ill-treatment and distress—the Royal Family separated.—Preparations for bringing the King to trial.—State of parties.—Report of a Committee—Speech of St. Just.—Thomas Paine.—Trial decreed.—Discovery of an iron closet—effect of the publication of some of the papers.—Proceedings with respect to Egalité.—Progress of the charges—Speech of St. André—Robespierre—Report—Louis appears at the bar—his interrogatory—debate on his request of counsel—decree of the Commune respecting them—they are named.—Feeling of the King.—Proceedings in the Convention.—Defence of Louis—his speech.—Debate.—Questions to be decided.—Exertions of the King's enemies.—Further debates.—Death decreed.—Opinions of Thomas Paine—Barrère—St. André—Egalité.—Protest of the King—observations of his counsel—his sentence announced—his requests—answer of the Convention.—Insults continued.—Last interview with his family.—The Abbé Edgeworth.—Execution—burial—character.—Effect of his execution.

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1792.
Observation
of Voltaire.

TREATING on the execution of Charles the First, Voltaire has observed, that, although English and other histories present instances of monarchs deposed and murdered by their subjects, still to discover one of a sovereign, who, after the forms of a pretended trial, was delivered by his own subjects to the hand of the executioner, we must go back to a period three centuries before the Christian era, to the history of

Agis, King of Sparta*. Little did that luminous and sprightly writer imagine that, within fifteen years after his own death, in the metropolis of his own vaunted country, by men who professed themselves to be proselytes of his philosophy, and adorers of his name, the same tragedy would be re-enacted, with circumstances of ferocity, cruelty, and meanness, which had never been displayed by the pagan subjects of Agis, or the puritan persecutors of Charles!

When the Constituent Assembly usurped into their own hands all the powers of the state, it was easy to perceive that the King's authority was abrogated, and could never be restored. When, on the sixth of October, Louis and his family were compelled to quit Versailles and reside in Paris, reasonable fears might be entertained for his life; but after the invasion of the Tuileries on the tenth of August, and the forcible detention of himself and family in the Temple, it was quite obvious that he would never be permitted to pass the doors of that prison, but to a place of execution. The imprisonment of a King with his family in the capital of his dominions for five months, if all decent respect had been shewn to their misfortunes, and all possible attention paid to their comfort, would have been a reverse of fortune calculated to excite the most afflicting sensations; but, when deposition from the throne, imprisonment, and the daily menace of a trial preceded by a condemnation, were embittered by all the insults which upstart malignity could suggest, or plebeian insolence execute, it is impossible to palliate such proceedings as the impulses of a moment of irritation and error, or to cast the blame on those alone by whom the outrages were perpetrated; they must form a stigma on the nation, in which, without reprehension or impediment, they were permitted, observed, and encouraged.

From the moment when the Royal Family were imprisoned, to the last hour of their lives, a series of cruelties was in constant progress; extending to the

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Treatment of
the Royal
Family.

* Essai sur les Mœurs, Chap. 179; Œuvres, Edition de Basle, tom. xix, p. 191.

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privation of almost the necessaries of life*, and to every description of personal insult. They were taken from the Feuillans to their prison in a coach drawn by two horses. The Royal Family, including the children and their immediate friends, the Princess de Lamballe, Madame de Tourzel and her daughter, were eight persons; but the Mayor, the procureur de la Commune, and a municipal officer, squeezed themselves in, making the whole party eleven†. These public officers wore their hats the whole way, and encouraged the rabble, of which a large body was collected, to persist in their execrations and abuse, by laughing, clapping their hands, and shouting "Vive la nation." At the Place Vendome, the carriage was stopped, that the King might contemplate the equestrian statue of Louis the Great, thrown from its pedestal, broken, and trodden under foot, while the populace cried incessantly, "Thus are tyrants treated!" The portion of the Temple assigned for the abode of these unhappy victims, was a turret in the tower; the building would have afforded a good residence for them all, but their oppressors chose to immure them in that contracted space. To the King was assigned a miserable bed without curtains; the Princess Elizabeth was obliged to sleep in the kitchen, with her waiting woman and the daughter of Madame de Tourzel, and the rest of the party were no better accommodated. The municipal officer who conducted the King's valet to see these apartments, observed, with characteristic savageness: "Your master was used to gilt ceilings; he shall now see how the assassins of the people are lodged."

With an affection and devotedness which did them immortal honour, some faithful adherents still accom-

* As the palace had been pillaged, and seals affixed to whatever was left, the Royal Family were in want of linen, apparel, conveniences, in short, of every thing. In this state of total deprivation, one of the officers of the Cent Suisses, who was nearly of the King's size, sent some articles for his Majesty's use. The Queen received some linen and other habiliments from the Duchesse de Grammont; and the Countess of Sutherland, lady of the English ambassador, having a son of the same age with the Dauphin, supplied him with clothes.

† M. Hue, in a note on this passage, observes with great naïveté, "It may be doubted that two horses were able to draw a heavy carriage, with eleven persons in it. I vouch the truth of the fact." Last Years of the Reign and Life of Louis the Sixteenth, p. 352, note.

panied the royal sufferers, although they must have anticipated the forfeit of their lives as the result of their fidelity. These were the Princess de Lamballe, Madame de Tourzel and her daughter, with a waiting woman for the Queen, and one for the Princess Elizabeth the Princess Royal and the Dauphin. The King had two valets-de-chambre, Messrs. Hue and Chamilly; but permission for their attendance was not obtained without great difficulty. Petion had provided women of his own selection to attend the Queen and the Princesses; their services were rejected; a decree was obtained from the Commune, ordering their substitution for the ladies who had been preferred; but this order being resisted, a new one more peremptory arrived, directing the removal of all persons who were not of the Royal Family. This heart-rending mandate was only opposed by the Queen, who interceded for the Princess de Lamballe, alleging, and truly, that she was of the Royal Family. Of all who were thus taken away, M. Hue alone returned; the ladies were sent to the prison of La Force, and to what fate the Princess de Lamballe was destined has already been related. The place of these honourable and affectionate attendants was supplied by a man, a creature of Petion, named Tison, and his wife; and, after some days, M. Cléry, who had long been in the service of the Royal Family, and last of the Dauphin, was admitted, and, when M. Hue was removed, alone remained to attend the captives.

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August 19th.

26th.

On the day of the massacres in the prisons, one Mathieu, a renegade Capuchin and a municipal officer, said to the King, "Sir, you do not know what is passing in Paris. The drum is every where beating to arms, minute-guns are firing, the people are enraged and calling out for vengeance. Not content with having had our brethren massacred on the 10th of August, with using chewed balls against them, thousands of which have been picked up at the Tuileries, you have now called in upon us a ferocious enemy, who threatens to massacre us, our wives, and children. Our death is sworn; we know it: but

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“ before it reaches us, you and your family will fall by the very hands of the municipal officers who guard you.” Happy had it been for the miserable sufferers if the insults and violences of that dreadful period had been confined to the brutal coarseness of this ferocious monk. The mob, after the murder of the Princess de Lamballe, flocked in great force to the Temple, declaring that they would break in and destroy the prisoners. They brought with them the head of the Princess on a pike, her heart on a sabre, and her naked body, to exhibit to the Queen. In vain were applications made to Santerre, to the Commune, and to the Assembly ; no assistance was afforded ; the narrowness of the stairs and the lowness of the doors, were the principal impediments to the intrusion. Many attempts were made, and all the municipal officers did not oppose them, to induce the King and Queen to go to the window, under pretence that the people believed they had escaped : this cruelty was prevented by means apparently harsh, but which might be meant mercifully, as compassion could only be shown under the semblance of brutality. The King enquired for what reason he was required to appear at the window ? “ Why, if you must know,” said a young officer of the guard, “ they want to show you the head of the Princess de Lamballe.” The Queen immediately fainted ; but the intended torture was avoided, and the municipal officers showed great anger at the disclosure. The mob still persevering in their endeavours to break in, one of the commissioners, named D’Aujon, stretched a three-coloured ribband across the entrance, to operate as a charm or talisman*.

In their decree for the imprisonment of Louis, the Assembly declared that he and his family were confided to the care and the virtues of the citizens of Paris, and it was promised that they should be treated with all the respect due to misfortune. Of the manner in which these words were construed, the instances above related

* Whether it did so or not, a characteristic trait of burlesque marked the event ; the brave D’Aujon demanded and received from one of the King’s attendants forty-five sous (1s. 10½d.) as the value of the damaged ribband.

form a specimen; but of the hourly personal insults they underwent, the detail would be no less disgusting than tedious. The tower, in which the Royal Family were at last confined, was about a hundred and fifty feet high, and consisted of four stories, arched, and supported in the middle by a great pillar. The area, within the walls, was about thirty feet square; it was rendered gloomy by bars and screens to the windows, and isolated by the removal of all contiguous and adjacent buildings, and a guard of three hundred men watched night and day.

On the pretence that an escape was apprehended, every person approaching the captives was rigorously examined, every article of linen returned from being washed, every book, every scrap of paper, minutely inspected; municipal officers listened to all conversation, and even the bed-rooms of the Queen and the Princess Elizabeth were not free from the presence of these tormentors. Another pretended apprehension was suicide; to prevent which, the King was deprived of his sword—an insult which he felt very deeply; and the Queen and Princess, who had already been obliged to surrender their writing materials, for fear they should maintain some secret correspondence, were also compelled to give up their scissars; the words “Sire” and “your Majesty” were carefully avoided: even before the abolition of royalty, the King was always called *Monsieur*, or spoken of as *Louis*. The municipal officers and the guard affectedly wore their hats in presence of the prisoners; talked loud, wrangled, and smoked in their apartment; and even boasted of annoying the females by discharging large collections of tobacco-smoke in their faces. It had been decreed that five hundred thousand francs (£20,750) should be allowed for the maintenance of the prisoners; but, acting on the principle of revolutionary economists, the ministers, although repeated applications were made, could never be prevailed on to disburse any part of the money, except two thousand livres (£84) in assignats, and a small sum deposited with the commissioners to meet casual expenses; and, in consequence,

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The tower of
the Temple.

Ill treatment
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of the Royal
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They are separated.

Preparations
for bringing
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trial.

State of parties

the clothes of the family went to decay, and the Princess Elizabeth was obliged, during the night, to repair the garments which her brother had worn in the day. In the midst of these insults and meannesses, care was taken to keep before the eyes of the King what would be his fate from the hands of those who might constitute themselves his judges. Drawings of the gallows and the guillotine were made in various parts of the prison, with gross and burlesque inscriptions denoting for whom they were predicted; and ferocious expressions from the commissioners and the guards kept the subject always present to his mind. The Commune, at length, separated the members of the Royal Family from each other, allowing only a very limited communication; and, as much as possible, the newspapers were kept from their inspection, excepting when they were produced for the purposes of insult and vexation*.

When the retreat of the invaders had removed all apprehension, and success in arms inspired unbounded confidence and presumption, measures were pursued for perpetrating the intended murder of the King. The Jacobin club decreed it, and their sentence was echoed by their affiliated societies; the Commune of Paris instructed the people, by means of orators, mounted on vessels, sabre in hand, and, if any one in the crowd presumed to shew any indications of a different opinion, his life was in danger. Deputies went to their places in the Convention through a double line of ferocious Jacobins; and when they complained of the terror that was thus occasioned, they were answered, by men who, through fear, had surrendered the power of delivering a free or genuine opinion,—“We are not afraid.†” But whatever strength the Jacobins seemed to possess, they had not yet subjugated all France: the Commune of Paris was theirs; but

* The particulars of the treatment of the Royal Family in the Temple are derived from *Journal de Cléry*; the *Last Years of the Reign and Life of Louis the Sixteenth*, by Francis Hue; *Private Memoirs of what passed in the Temple*, by the Duchess d'Angoulême; *Lacretelle and other Histories*; and *Biographical Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 93 to 118, and the authorities there cited.

† *Lacretelle*, tome ix. p. 142.

the better class of tradesmen distrusted and often resisted them; and, from many parts of the republic, addresses were received, disavowing their ferocious acts, and holding up to reprobation some of their most atrocious partizans, particularly Marat; and some even went so far as to censure Robespierre. Some departments, particularly those of the Bouches du Rhone, Calvados, Finisterre, and the Gironde, sent to the capital bands of federates, expressly to protect the Convention and secure its independence. In the ministry, Roland represented the Girondin party, who, steeped to the lips in crime, affected to preserve a rigid attention to the calls of virtue, while the demands of desperate jacobinism were patronized by Pache, the war minister. In this contest, the issue was easily to be foreseen: activity, energy, and an indifference as to means, were sure, in the end, to triumph. Pache was insidiously employed in filling up offices, and in obtaining commissions and commands for men devoted to the views of his faction; thus seducing the army, as well as corrupting the state; while the opposing party exhausted their talents in declamatory proclamations and finely turned periods, and their wisdom in little cunning tricks, suppressing the publications of their opponents at the post-office, or substituting their own. Even in an inferior circumstance, there was the same striking difference: the wife of Roland, well-educated, proud, and self-important, maintained a sort of dignified state, and governed, not only her husband, but all who surrounded him. This fact was so well known, that when letters, addresses, or statements were produced in the Convention, which bore a particular stamp of composition, Marat, or some deputy similarly gifted, made a burlesque motion that the papers should be sent back to the place from which they came—the boudoir of Madame Roland. Pache's wife and daughters, on the contrary, assumed the manners and conduct of the faction to which they belonged, frequented the clubs, the meetings, and the sections, and even the barracks of the federates, using all their arts and blandishments to gain their adherence. Roland and his

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party were incessant in their denunciations of the massacres of September, the tyranny and malversation of the Commune; such complaints, always striking at and irritating a great number of persons more than were directly named, became insipid through frequent repetition, and were easily dismissed from attention, in favour of recriminatory charges of incivism, aristocracy, and royalism. The mere mob were easily gained by the Jacobins: had the opposing party possessed political virtue, steadiness of character, unity of purpose, and energy of conduct, they had sufficient ability and ample means to acquire a triumphant ascendancy; but had they opposed the proceedings against the King, they must have been stigmatized as royalists.

Nov. 7.
Report of committee on form of proceeding.

13th.

A committee of twenty-one was instituted to report on the forms to be used in bringing Louis to a trial. Valazé presented one, of such length, that, the entire reading being judged inconvenient, it was printed and distributed to all the members. The questions were—"Could the King be tried?" and if so, "before what tribunal?" On the one side, the inviolability of the King was maintained, founded on the constitution, which had been accepted by him, and sworn to by all. These principles were urged only by a few members; the Brissotine party, bound in the chain of their own intrigues, could not maintain the inviolability which they had been the first to invade, or affirm any right derived to the King from the constitution, when they had degraded him to his present condition, by impugning every act he had done in pursuance of its sanctions.

Speech of St.
Just.

Little effort was made to answer the arguments in favour of the King; but sentiments of extreme savageness, supported by perversions of ancient and modern history, and reinforced by arguments of the personal safety of the members of the Convention itself, were pressed with great vehemence and perseverance. St. Just took the lead. He was a young man, barely five-and-twenty years old, cold, stiff, and affected; but he displayed, at his early age, a hardness of heart and resolute cruelty, which could only have been expected from long practice and blunted feelings. The King,

he observed, was not to be tried like a mere citizen, but as an enemy; the forms of proceeding not to be regulated by the civil law, but by the law of nations. "A day, perhaps, will come," he said, "when men, elevated above our prejudices, as much as we are above those of the Vandals, will be astonished at the barbarism of an age, when the putting a tyrant on his trial could be viewed as a question of principle—when the people, who had a tyrant to try, raised him to the rank of a citizen, before they investigated his crimes. They will be astonished, that, in the eighteenth century, men should have been less enlightened than in the days of Cæsar: that tyrant was sacrificed in full senate, without any process but two-and-twenty stabs of the dagger—without appeal to any law but the liberty of Rome. To try a king like a citizen! the very word will astonish a calm posterity. To try, is to apply the law: the law is a relative system of justice; now, what relation can there be between human nature and kings? Men of generous minds, in a future day, will say, that a king ought to be put on his trial, not for the crimes of his administration, but for having been a king; for nothing can legalise that occupation; and with whatever illusions, under whatever conventions, royalty may be enveloped, it is an eternal crime, against which every man has a right to rise and arm himself. The blind consent of a people is no justification; for the people who consent become criminal against nature, which has given to all men a secret mission to exterminate all regal dominion. To assert that a man can reign innocently, is a gross and evident absurdity. Every king is a rebel and an usurper. A king cannot be tried according to the laws of a country, or rather of a city. There was nothing in the laws of Numa to warrant the trial of Tarquin; or in those of England to justify the condemnation of Charles. People!" he concluded, "if ever the King is acquitted, remember, we are no longer worthy of your confidence—you may accuse us of treachery!"

In a similar tone, the same line of argument was

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Observations
of Thomas
Paine.

pursued by other members who seemed to vie with each other in malignity and rancour.

Thomas Paine, unable to speak the language of the people he represented, forwarded a declaration in writing, recommending the King's trial. Speaking of the feelings entertained in foreign countries, and the compact formed among the crowned robbers, he said, "Already we have some discoveries of the conduct of Mr. Guelph, the Elector of Hanover, and violent presumptions tend to inculcate the same man, his court, and his ministers, in his quality of King of England." Then describing the reception afforded in this country to M. de Calonne, and many other acts, he said, "Nothing, I believe, but the fear long felt, of seeing a revolution break out in England, has hindered that court from giving as much publicity to its proceedings as Austria or Prussia. Louis the Sixteenth," he added, "as an individual, is not worthy the attention of the republic; but, regarding him as a part of that band of conspirators, as a delinquent whose trial may lead all nations to know and detest the disastrous system of monarchy, the plots and intrigues of their own courts, his trial ought to proceed. As to his inviolability," he concluded, "it were better not to be mentioned: seeing nothing in Louis but a man of weak and limited understanding, ill educated, like all his class; subject, as it is said, to frequent fits of drunkenness, and whom the Constituent Assembly impudently replaced upon a throne for which he was unfit; if, at last, any compassion may be shown, it will not proceed from the burlesque notion of a pretended inviolability."

Trial decreed.

After such speeches had been delivered and applauded, the Convention decreed that Louis should be put on his trial, and were not ashamed to constitute themselves his judges.

Discovery of
an iron chest.
23rd.

A disclosure, made at this time, had a material influence on these proceedings, and subsequently, much against their hopes, on the fate of the Girondists. A locksmith, in Paris, gave information to Roland that shortly before the 10th of August he had been em-

ployed by the King to construct an iron closet behind a wall in the Tuileries ; from the mystery which had been observed, and the secrecy which was enjoined, he had no doubt that it concealed papers of importance. Instead of making any communication to the Convention, to the committee which they had appointed to examine all papers in the palace, or to his colleagues, the minister repaired thither, accompanied only by the locksmith, and found the closet and took away the papers it contained. The King always denied any knowledge of the construction of this recess, and the locksmith was never produced to give any evidence on the matter. It was quite possible that after the 10th of August such a cabinet might have been made, and some papers which had been found in the palace placed in it to impart a show of importance to a supposed discovery. Some of the papers were written by Louis, some appeared to be marked in the margin with his notes. When these were afterward produced to him, he acknowledged some and disavowed the others. To suppose that the closet was fabricated and the papers falsified, it is also necessary to imagine that much art and much wickedness were employed to very little purpose. The papers contained nothing to criminate the King ; there was no correspondence with the emigrants or with foreign powers ; nothing but a few notes of payments to the gardes du corps, after the expulsion of the Royal Family from Versailles, and some small sums in liquidation of debts left undischarged by the Princes at the time of their emigration. But the papers disclosed many facts which inflicted mortal wounds on the names of some patriots, particularly Mirabeau ; and it is probable, that if the contents of the iron closet had been unreservedly disclosed, the descent of Petion and some other friends of the ministers into the gloomy regions of unpopularity would have been even more precipitous than it was. Thus, while Roland, by his manœuvre, exposed himself to suspicion, on one hand, of having invented the discovery, and of having, at least, falsified some papers ; he was, on the other, censured for the wily manner in

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December 5.
Effect of the
publication of
some of the
papers.

which he had secreted the documents, and accused of having suppressed such as would have injured his own associates. The Jacobin Club and the Convention rang with reproaches against him, and one of the sections of Paris, called Des Piques, presented to the Commune a declaration that he had lost their confidence*.

When some of these papers were read in the Convention, the Jacobins affected surprise and horror at disclosures which shewed only the irresolution of the King, and the restrained activity of his friends; but when the names of individuals were mentioned who had, or who sought, connexions with the court, decrees of accusation were successively carried against them: among others were Monsieur de Talleyrand, M. Talon, M. Dufresne Saint-Léon, and M. de Saint-Foie. The engagements of Mirabeau had not then been disclosed as they afterward were by M. de Bouillé and other writers; but as soon as the facts relating to him were made apparent from these papers, general cries of indignation arose. The Jacobins were particularly strenuous in revenging the contempt with which he had sometimes treated them. "Infamous wretch, " out of the Pantheon with him," was the cry of the Mountain. Manuel, with great difficulty, averted an immediate decree, by persuading them to put his memory under arrest, until they had more information; but a veil was thrown over his bust, and the mob pursued all images of him with as much eagerness as if he had been a king. Merlin of Douai, Barrère, and some other members, succeeded in exculpating themselves; but the Mountain triumphed even in their acquittal. "We have them fast," they said; "they " must vote for death."

4th.
Proceedings
with respect
to Egalité.

On the day before this discussion, a motion had been made for proceeding with the trial; but an intimation that endeavours were used to save the King, or at least provide a successor, called forth some animated remarks, which ended in a decree that death

* Moniteur, 25th November, 1792, p. 1397.

should be the punishment of any who should propose the re-establishment of royalty; and, to clear themselves from all imputations with respect to Egalité, some members proposed to banish all the Bourbons; a measure which would have included, not him alone, but his eldest son, who was fighting under Dumouriez. Egalité published a letter to his fellow citizens, with a copy of the speech he had made in the tribune, declaring the high value he set on the title of French citizen; proffering, for its sake, to renounce all claims as a member of the reigning dynasty, and professing the readiness of all his children to sign the same engagement with their blood. The motion being pressed, occasioned a debate, in which much fierceness and personality were displayed. A decree of banishment was obtained; but it was represented afterward that the Convention could not deprive the people of their right of election by banishing one of their members; and for this, and for some other reasons, the vote was rescinded.

On a motion for the formation of a committee to make a report of the crimes with which the King was charged, to arrange the papers in support of it, and to indicate the form and course of proceeding, St. André, assuming as matter of fact that the people had pronounced judgment on the tenth of August, and confirmed it in their primary assemblies by returning members to the Convention, insisted that his guilt was established, and the only remaining question was the mode of punishment. Robespierre maintained that, upon principle, they were bound immediately to condemn him to death, by virtue of an insurrection. The Convention, he said, was led astray from the real question. There could be no trial; Louis was not a person accused, nor were they judges; they were statesmen and representatives of a nation, who were not to deliver a verdict against a man, but to execute a measure of public safety; to exercise an act of national providence. Louis is dethroned by his crimes; he denounced the whole French people as rebels, and called in the arms of confederated tyrants to chastise them; victory and the people have decided that he

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7th.

15th.

20th.

Progress of
the charges
against the
King.

Nov. 30.
Speech of
St. André.

Dec. 3.
Robespierre.

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alone is the rebel; he cannot now be tried; he must be condemned, or the republic cannot be acquitted. Nations do not try kings in courts of justice; they launch their thunder; they do not condemn, but re-plunge them into nothingness. Examples do not apply; if Cromwell tried Charles the First by a judicial commission,—if Elizabeth of England caused Mary of Scotland to be sentenced by judges,—it is natural that tyrants, who sacrifice their equals, not to the people, but to their ambition, should seek to deceive the opinion of the vulgar, by illusory forms; in those cases, the question did not regard principles or liberty; it was confined to knavery and intrigue; but the people have only one law to follow; that of justice and reason, supported by its own omnipotence. Having treated with disdainful derision the notion of assigning counsel to defend the King, he concluded a long speech, replete with violence and acrimony, by proposing that the convention should immediately decide on the fate of Louis. His wife, and other persons charged with the same offence, might be sent before the tribunals; his son should be kept in the Temple, until peace and public liberty were established. He moved that Louis should be declared a traitor to the French nation, and a criminal against human nature; that he should be made a great example to all the world, on the very spot where the generous martyrs of liberty had expired on the tenth of August; and that a monument, consecrated to the event, should cherish in the hearts of people the sentiment of their rights and a horror of tyrants; while to tyrants it should impart a salutary terror of the justice of the people.

Committee
formed.

3rd.

6th.

Fearful of losing time by hearing too many harangues, the Convention decreed that no more should be pronounced from the tribune; but, as they were all prepared in writing, they should be left with the president, printed and distributed to all the members. The committee was finally formed, with instructions to be prepared, on the fourth day, by eight o'clock in the morning, with their report, containing the series of questions to be proposed to Louis Capet, who was

on the following day to be brought to the bar to answer them.

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At the time appointed, the report was produced and read by Lindet. It was of great length, and charged upon Louis all the events which had occurred since the meeting of the States General. His crimes during the sittings of the Constituent Assembly were connected with an uniform plan of oppression and destruction. The acceptance of the constitution cast the veil of public indulgence over the preceding offences ; but that had been rent away by Louis, when, in 1792, he caused those daggers, which in 1791 had been forged in all the workshops in Europe, to be plunged into the bosom of the country. This mixture of extravagant metaphors and false assumptions was yet not sufficiently comprehensive to please the ferocious party. Marat complained that the reporter had omitted to mention sixty thousand patriot soldiers expelled from their battalions ; the monopolizers of money and of grain ; the societies for causing scarcity ; the judicial massacres committed in the King's name ; the obstructions by which the course of justice had been impeded ; and many other instances of guilt. No additions to the act of accusation were made ; but the King was ordered to appear on the morrow.

1792.
10th.
Report.

Before this tribunal, composed of accusers usurping the office of judges, the King was conveyed and put on his answer to interrogatories. A degree of solemn mystery was observed by the commissioners toward the prisoner, intended to alarm his fears and destroy his presence of mind : his family were terrified, but he was unmoved. The Mayor of Paris was introduced, and read the decree, in pursuance of which he was conveyed in the Mayor's carriage, attended by a strong body of artillery, cavalry, and infantry, through streets patrolled by regular troops and lined with national guards. When informed of his arrival at the gate of the Feuillans, Barrère, the President, announced it to the Convention, reminding them that they were about to exercise the right of national justice ; that the eyes

11th.
Louis appears
before the
Convention.

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Undergoes an
interrogatory.

of Europe were upon them ; that history would collect and an incorruptible posterity judge their actions with inflexible severity. He recommended an abstinence from all display of passion, and strict silence, as becoming to judges. Their dignity ought to befit the majesty of the French people, which, through them, was to give a great lesson to kings, and an example which would tend to the emancipation of nations. To the tribunes, too, he addressed himself, not in terms of a presiding power, commanding order, but as a suppliant entreating forbearance. He admonished them to recollect the terrible silence which was kept when Louis was brought back from Varennes ; a silence which was the forerunner of the judgment which other nations would pronounce on their kings. Santerre announced that Louis Capet waited the orders of the Assembly, and he was admitted. The act of accusation was read. Without presenting to him a copy of this long desultory composition, even to refresh his memory by a cursory perusal, or assist his judgment by a hasty comparison of its various parts with the pretended facts on which it was founded ; without allowing a moment for preparation or reflection, the King was interrogated on the various charges, article by article. The interrogatory, notwithstanding its apparent rudeness and want of method, was a work of the most subtle malice. The questions sometimes assumed an extraordinary latitude, sometimes were distinguished by a laborious minuteness : they sometimes imputed to the King the most flagrant tyranny ; and at others the most refined and cautious hypocrisy. The form which had been prepared appeared occasion, ally deficient ; the committee framed new questions, put them in writing, and delivered them to the President. The King answered them with frankness, precision, and promptness. At the end of the interrogatory, he demanded a copy of the act of accusation, and the communication of the papers on which it was founded ; and counsel to manage his defence. The papers were then produced, and he was asked, on each separately, whether he avowed it : without the least

hesitation, he admitted some, but denied the far greater number to be genuine. At six o'clock he was withdrawn into the *chambre des conférences*, where he begged for a morsel of bread, not having tasted food all day*.

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After the King's departure, a stormy debate arose, on a motion that he should be allowed one or more counsel. The members and the tribunes vied with each other in violence and clamour; and the President was obliged to put on his hat, the last signal of unappeasable tumult, before order could be restored; the same circumstances generally attended the debate on this trial. All who presumed to utter a sentiment in the King's favour were represented as desirous to restore his authority and to abrogate the republic, and the fury of the populace was excited by continual invectives. It was required that all questions which might arise on the proceeding, should be voted by *appel nominal*†, that the people might know who were their friends and defenders; and when it was urged that by the law of the land every person accused had a right to name one or two friends or advocates as his defenders, Marat characteristically answered, that this was not a common proceeding, and they were not to admit the chicanery of the law courts. It was at last decreed, almost unanimously, that the King should have counsel; and after some dispute, whether or not the intelligence should be communicated by the ushers of the assembly, it was resolved that a deputation of four members should convey the information.

Debate on his
request for
counsel.

When the King was reconducted to his prison, he found that the Commune, taking upon themselves to pronounce that his family were his accomplices, had forbidden all communication between them, and that

The King re-
strained from
communica-
tion with his
family.

* For the transactions of this day, see *Biographical Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 112, et seq., and the authorities there cited, particularly *Moore's Journal*, vol. ii. p. 503, et seq.; *Eloge Historique et Funèbre de Louis XVI.*, par M. Montjoye, p. 246. et seq.; *Histoire du Procès de Louis XVI.*; *Histories in general*; and *La-crételle*, tom. ix. p. 173; *Thiers*, tom. ii. p. 346.

† The *appel nominal* was made by a sort of "Call of the House." Taking the departments in succession, the President read the name of every member, and he was obliged, if present, to ascend the Tribune and give his vote

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Decree of the
Commune
respecting his
counsel.

13th.

Counsel
named.

even his valet should not be permitted to see his relatives. They further decreed that when the Convention should have fixed on his counsel, they should have no communication with him, except in the presence of municipal officers, and that, on such occasions, the presence of his valet should not be permitted. Before they were introduced, they were to be stripped and searched, even to their most secret parts, dressed in other clothes, under the inspection of the commissioners, and bound by oath not to disclose any thing that might come to their knowledge. When this most atrocious ordinance was made known to the Convention, it excited a storm of disapprobation; but they durst not hazard a decree annulling it; Robespierre treated it as the result of a most laudable patriotism, although unfortunately tending to create pity for the greatest of criminals; he would not therefore consent to its abrogation; the assembly evaded the question by declaring that they had already decreed that counsel might confer freely with the prisoner, and passed to the order of the day.

Louis named as his defenders two eminent advocates, Target and Tronchet. The latter readily accepted the unpopular and dangerous office; Target, to his immortal disgrace, refused; but his deficiency in honour and virtue, gave opportunity for many displays of them by others. M. Lamoignon Malesherbes, who had twice been called on by the King to fill official situations, and was now, at a very advanced age, retired from public life, and living with his family upon his estate, in a letter to the President of the Convention, tendered his services, which were allowed by that body and most gratefully accepted by the King. Several others presented themselves. Some who had emigrated, or retired from France, displayed a noble zeal on this occasion; among them are to be named M. Lally Tollendal, MM. Cazalés, Mounier, and De Narbonne. M. Bertrand de Moleville, the Chevalier de Graves, M. De Bouillé, and M. Necker, severally offered themselves as advocates or witnesses, or published papers in vindication of the King. As

the inquiry proceeded, and, after a very early day had been fixed for the hearing, and upon a consideration of the number and variety of papers to be examined and analyzed, M. De Seze, a young advocate, of high and approved ability, was added to his defenders.

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From the society of M. De Malesherbes, an old friend, and in manners so different from those whom he generally saw, Louis derived great satisfaction; but all the toils of his advocates, all their consolatory assurances, did not impart to him the slightest portion of confidence, or even of hope. To prepare his defence, he considered as the last duty he owed to himself in this world; but when it was suggested that the proofs of his innocence were perfect and must be triumphant, and that the Convention would surely never go to the extent of regicide; he answered, that the very circumstance of his evidence being so perfect, convinced him that his doom was certain. The fact, he observed, was well known to every one of the deputies: they had no personal hatred against him, but yet persisted in bringing him to trial: the trial of a king was synonymous with his condemnation*. From the defence, prepared by M. De Seze, he insisted, with characteristic self-denial, that every phrase calculated to raise a feeling of compassion should be retrenched.

Feeling of the
King.

If the King's opinion of his imminent fate was not entirely derived from his own judgment, the proceedings in the Convention were amply calculated to impart it. A motion, that he should have an inspection of the original papers on which his accusation was founded, was met with every possible objection as to delay, and the difficulty and uncertainty of proofs; and it was endeavoured to obtain a vote, that in six days the King should be tried, and the assembly pronounce on his fate without any adjournment. One member, exclaiming that the blood of their brothers cried for

Proceedings in
the Convention

Dec. 15.

* Locré, tome ix. p. 192. The same author relates, that, after his defence had been made, the King good-humouredly asked M. De Malesherbes whether he had not seen the white woman in the neighbourhood of the Temple. "What do you mean, sir?" said Malesherbes. "What!" the King replied, with a smile, "do you not know the popular superstition, that when a prince of my house is near his death, a woman, clothed in white, is always seen wandering about near the place of his residence?" P. 244.

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vengeance, added that the very existence of the Convention was a sufficient proof of the guilt of Louis. A decree having passed, allowing him free intercourse with his family, Tallien moved a repeal, alleging that his wife and sisters were his accomplices, and that if they were allowed to meet, they might concert answers and means of defence; his proposition was supported by the younger Robespierre, Drouet, and some others; and when he had been reprimanded by the President, for his violence and irregularity, he required that it should be decreed as a principle, that all accomplices might confer together. A decree was at length framed, that the King should be permitted to see his children only; but after they had been with him, they should not be allowed access to their mother and aunt. In these debates, a savage atrocity was not more remarkable than a frivolous pedantry. "Hercules," said one orator, "did not amuse himself by bringing robbers to trial; he purged the earth of them." "The best way to judge a king, is the shortest—that of Scævola and Brutus." The cases of Brutus and Tarquin were worn threadbare by continual reference; and it was quite evident that these legislators had made themselves acquainted with scraps and extracts of ancient history and mythology, merely to afford instances in favour of their propositions, but without any knowledge of causes or effects.

26th.
Defence of
Louis.

The debates were continued until the very day appointed for the defence. The attendance of the King and his counsel being announced, the President forbade all persons, members and audience, from indicating opinions by murmurs or expressions of applause. De Seze, at the request of his august client, was permitted to read his defence, a task which occupied upwards of five hours. It was an able composition, both in legal argument and explanation of facts. It is little to say of it, that it amounted to a complete exculpation; the averments against which it was directed were so vague, so false, and often so inapplicable, that to triumph over them was hardly to be called a victory. Had the tribunal to which he addressed

himself possessed either a feeling of honour or a sense of justice, the appeal could not have been fruitless. He asserted, with irresistible force, the inviolability of the King ; and, with great address and in terms which many of his hearers might afterwards bitterly recollect as prophetic, he reminded them that their own inviolability stood only on the same foundation. If they tried him as a king, inviolability was his shield ; if they degraded him from that station, he was amenable only as a citizen ; but, in that quality, entitled to all the conservative forms which every citizen might claim, as his imprescriptible right. “ Where,” he asked, “ is that separation of powers, without which neither constitution nor liberty can exist ? Where are the juries of inculcation and of trial, hostages given by the law for the security of innocence ? Where is the right of challenge ? Where, in a word, are all those sacred precautions, by which the law protects even the guilty from an illegal sentence ? I will speak to you, citizens,” he said, “ with the frankness of a free man ; I look around for judges, and can see only accusers. You claim to pronounce on the fate of Louis, and you are his prosecutors ; you have already declared your wishes ; your opinions are current through all Europe ; Louis will, therefore, be the only man for whom there exists no law, nor any form of proceeding ; he has neither the rights of a citizen nor the prerogatives of a king ; he has neither the benefits of his original, nor of his altered, condition. What a strange, what an inconceivable destiny !” After fully investigating the imputed facts, he gave a succinct view of the conduct of Louis, from his accession to his fall. He came to the throne at the age of twenty, a model of morality ; free from every criminal weakness, every corrupting passion, economical, just, strict, and showing himself the constant friend of the people. He cited numerous instances of this disposition ; “ and yet,” he said, “ at this day, in the name of that people, it is required —. Citizens, I do not finish my sentence—I pause, before history—remember that history will decide upon your judgment, and that her decision will be that of ages.”

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His speech.

At the close of this address, the King said, that, in speaking to them, probably for the last time, he would declare that his conscience reproached him with nothing; he had never feared a public investigation of his conduct, but was struck to the heart at being accused of wishing to shed the blood of his people, and at finding the misfortune of the 10th of August ascribed to him. The multiplied proofs he had always given of his love for the people, and his constant conduct, appeared to him sufficient proofs that he had never feared to expose himself to spare their blood, and to repel far from him such an imputation. A few questions were then put to him as to certain papers, which he answered; and, having declared that he had nothing to add, was directed to retire.

Debate.

When the King left the hall, it was moved by Duhem, that the Convention should decide, without separating, on his fate. The debate was inconceivably tumultuous. The Mountain, who supported this proposition, formed a body in the hall, abusing all who opposed it; treating them as friends of tyranny, advising them to go and beg pardon from the tyrant, and charging them with being enemies to the good citizens who had achieved the glorious victory of the 10th of August. In their fury they accused the President of partiality, mounted his seat even to the very steps of his chair, and for a quarter of an hour defied his authority. It was, at last, decreed that the discussion on the judgment should be opened and continued to its close, to the exclusion of all other business.

1793.
January 14.
Questions to
be decided.

15th.
Decisions on
the first two.

After several other debates equally furious, it was decreed that the Convention should decide on three questions, to be propounded in the following order, and decided on a mere majority, on an appel nominal. Is Louis guilty or not? Shall your decision, whatever it may be, await the ratification of the people? and What penalty has Louis incurred? On the first question, the votes were almost unanimous; the chief distinction between individual members was that some gave their opinions merely as statesmen. Vergniaud had made a powerful speech against the proceeding;

but, alarmed by the fear of losing their popularity, their power, and their safety, he and the rest of his party voted the affirmative. The second question was rendered necessary by the time-serving disingenuousness of this miserable faction: they would not venture to declare the King not guilty, but hoped to save him by this manœuvre. This insidious attempt was repelled by an alarming majority*.

In judgment, no less than in violence, the Girondins were excelled by the Mountain. Had the questions been put in a different order, as they ought to have been, and had the decree of death been pronounced only by a small majority, the appeal to the people would probably have been granted, as a motion, founded on reason and justice; but that recourse having been denied, the last question was regarded with anxiety, and was the subject of great effort and struggle, both among the members and the people. The Jacobins added to the force they already possessed, which for many months had kept Paris in a state of stupor, large bands from the departments in which blood had been most profusely poured out; the assassins of Avignon swelled the ranks of the murderers of September, and the disorderly refuse of the armies, drawn together by Pache, reinforced this cut-throat legion. During the second appel nominal, these men haunted and harassed all the members who were adverse to their views: they filled the tribunes, crowded the bar of the Convention, spread themselves through the long corridors, and occupied the coffee-houses and other places to which members repaired for refreshment. At their signals, the mob placed in the Tuileries kept up an incessant cry of "Death to the tyrant!" and when any deputy appeared who was adverse to their views, the cry became "Death to the voter! His death or yours!"

Beset by this army of ruffians, the Convention proceeded to the third appel nominal. Lanjuinais moved for a repeal of the decree that a majority of a

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Exertions of
the King's
enemies.

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Further
debates.

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single vote should be sufficient to decide the sentence, and complained of the mob which was assembled and the means of intimidation which were used; but Danton, true to the principles which guided him in September, declared he saw nothing in the conduct of the people but a respectful, though ardent, expression of public opinion. In this last struggle, cowardice or cunning wrought their usual effect on the Girondins. Fearful of increasing the popular hatred, which they saw rising against them, their leaders, Vergniaud, Guadet, and Gensonné, voted for death; but with an inefficient and absurd restriction, that the Convention, after its judgment should deliberate whether it would not be for the interest of the public to defer the execution. Among the opinions delivered, many strange substitutions for an immediate execution were proposed; some recommended imprisonment until a peace, and then banishment; some were for immediate exile; some proposed that Louis should be detained as a hostage, and executed whenever a foreign force should enter on the territory of the republic; and Condorcet, professing to shew his clemency, voted for the severest punishment next to death, imprisonment for life in fetters. Such were the proceedings of this tyrannical body. They formed themselves into a judicial tribunal, commenced a trial, when neither the definition of a crime nor the right of the accused had been fixed; proceeded without evidence, on a charge which was not supported by any law; declared their decisions before their proceedings were begun, and, as they went on, established by acts of instantaneous legislation, the forms of trial, the description of the crime, and the nature of the punishment. On casting up the votes, the whole number of the Convention, which should have been seven hundred and forty-nine, was reduced by death, absence, and refusals to vote, to seven hundred and twenty-one. Of these, thirty-four gave their opinions for death with various restrictions; two for imprisonment in chains; and three hundred and nineteen for confinement or banishment; total, three hundred and fifty-five. The number of votes for death,

Votes on the
question.

Death
decreed.

absolutely, was three hundred and sixty-six: majority, eleven. The President, Vergniaud, after enumerating the suffrages, said, "The punishment pronounced against Louis is death!"

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In giving their votes, most of the members accompanied them with observations, of which a few deserve to be mentioned. Thomas Paine, who, as already has been intimated, did not speak French, sent a long declaration of his opinion, translated, to the President. It was an invective against royal authority, taking for a sort of text a sentence uttered in the Jacobin club: "Make me a king to-day, and to-morrow I shall be a robber." The history of monarchy, in all countries, proved, he said, that it was so fruitful in rascality, that it destroyed all natural ties, even those of brotherhood. He voted, not for death, but the detention of Louis until the end of the war, and the banishment of him and all his family. This opinion, repeated on a subsequent occasion, produced a worthy antagonist, Marat, who, in the first place, interrupted the reading, by declaring that Paine, being a Quaker, and, by his religion, averse to capital punishments, had no right to vote; being called to order on this point, he next maintained that the interpreter translated falsely; but this assertion was overruled; and Paine concluded, "Ah, citizens! do not afford the despots of England the pleasure of seeing the man, who aided in rescuing from his shackles my dear brethren of America, sent to the scaffold." Barrère delivered a very long and methodical opinion, in the course of which he made many reflections on the government, the parties, and the publications in England; and afterward, in giving his vote for death, he said, "The supreme law of public safety tells me, that between tyrants and people war must always be deadly. The same law tells me, that the punishment of Louis will be a terrible lesson, not only to kings, but to the factious, the anarchists, the pretenders to a dictatorship, or to any other power resembling royalty. The tree of liberty, an ancient author observes, thrives only when it is watered with the blood of tyrants of every

Opinions
given.

Thomas
Paine.

19th.

4th.
Barrère.

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Saint André.

“description.” Saint André voted in like manner, giving as his reason that the war between liberty and tyranny was a war to death; half-measures were always repugnant to the interests of the state; and no people could attain freedom but by the death of tyrants.

Egalité.

Numerous quotations might be made of sentiments not less ferocious and sanguinary; but these have been extracted as having reference to transactions in England. One instance, which has no such application, cannot be omitted, from the effect it produced in all parts of the world, and on all descriptions of men, not even excepting the blood-thirsty wretches in whose presence it was uttered; it is the votes of the King's cousin, Egalité, or Duke of Orléans. On the first appel nominal, when he declared Louis guilty, a general murmur informed him of the sensation which his conduct occasioned; but, on the other, when, with all the appearances of composure and premeditation, he pronounced the sentence of death, the words, “Scoundrel!” and “monster!” burst from every mouth. He sealed his own destruction; every one loathed, every one cursed him, except his unfortunate victim, who, while he regretted that a near relative, a descendant of Henry the Fourth, should have so conducted himself, ascribed his vote not altogether to hatred, but to fear.

17th.
The King's
protestObservations
of De Seze.

Tronchet.

Malesherbes.

Robespierre.

When the final discussion was ended, counsel were admitted, and M. De Seze read a protest, signed by the King, claiming an appeal from them to the nation; and the advocate added, as a petitioner, a request for revoking the decree, which, when the constitution required that two-thirds of a jury should agree before any prisoner should be condemned to lose his life, made that event, in the present case, depend on a majority of one only. Tronchet, who had been a member of the Committee for framing the constitution, supported this proposition in an earnest and luminous address. M. De Malesherbes endeavoured to follow him, but tears and sobs choked his utterance, and he requested that he might be allowed a hearing on the morrow. Robespierre, in resisting the applica-

tion, spoke of forgiving the sensibility of this truly honourable old man; but it is said that his tone and his looks declared that he had resolved on his destruction. The request was refused, and, on a new appeal nominal, an adjournment moved by Guadet was also negated*.

Santerre, attended by the executive council and other persons, repaired to the Temple, and the secretary read the decrees of the Convention. Louis delivered a paper to Garat, with a request that it might be communicated to the Convention; as some hesitation was shewn, the King read the contents. They were a request of delay for three days, that he might prepare to appear before his Maker; and for that purpose, a free communication with a priest, whom he would name, and who should be free from all fear and apprehension on account of his having performed this act of charity. He required also that during this interval he might have free communication with his family; that they might be at full liberty to retire to whatever place they might think proper; that he should be freed from the perpetual watchfulness of the Commune; and he recommended to the benevolence of the nation those who had employments about his person, in obtaining which many of them had embarked their whole property; together with some old persons and children who derived from him their only means of subsistence. The Convention passed to the order of the day on the request of a respite, and decreed that Louis might receive the aid of any minister he should select; that he might freely, and without restraint, see his family; that just indemnities should be granted to the members of his household; and they added, as an everlasting record to their dishonour, that the nation, ever great and just, would pay attention to the lot of his family. Garat returned to the King with this decree, and accompanied by an Irish ecclesiastic, the Abbé Edgeworth de Firmont, the individual whose attendance had been requested.

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19th.

20th.
The King's
sentence
announced.

His requests.

Answer of the
Convention.

* 386 to 310.

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1793.
Insults offered
to the King.

It is justly observed that the lowest degree of meanness to which man can descend is shewn in contempt for the unfortunate. A King, deprived of the external circumstances which once distinguished him, is entitled to a behaviour marked with dignified compassion and a tender regard to his former state, even when he has been justly degraded. Wanton injury and unnecessary rudeness serve not to display vigour and firmness in the minds of those who evince them, but to prove that it is to circumstances, dress, attendance, power, that such minds are prepared to bend, and that they revel in the luxury of malignant indignity, when the individual, in whose presence they would formerly have crouched and trembled, is reduced to a dependence on their humanity and forbearance. A specimen has already been given of the indignities offered to the Royal Family; but, in the latter days of the King, insults were studiously accumulated and repeated in every form. In the reports to the Commune, this disposition was frequently displayed. In one it was stated that Louis, having risen at half-past seven o'clock, and read his breviary, breakfast was brought, but he declined taking any, because in the ember weeks he was ordered to fast. This devotion, said Dorat Cubières, the officer on duty, is not a good quality in a King; Charles the Ninth and Henry the Third were also very devout*. They refused him the use of a pair of scissars to cut his nails; and took away his penknife. This last piece of insolence extorted from him the exclamation: "What! do you think me such a coward as to destroy myself!"

20th.
Last interview
with his
family.

According to the permission granted by the Convention, the King had a parting interview with the Queen and his family. On this scene much eloquence has been exhausted, both in description and observation, and the theme is ample; but it will be sufficient here to give the natural and unadorned account of the only survivor. "We ran to his apartment," she

* *Moniteur* du 24 Decembre, 1792, p. 1525.

says, " and found him much altered ; he wept for us, " and not for fear of death ; he related his trial to my " mother, apologizing for the wretches who had condemned him ; he told her that it was proposed to " attempt to save him, by having recourse to the primary assemblies, but that he would not consent, lest " it should excite confusion in the country. He then " gave my brother some religious advice, and desired " him, above all, to forgive those who caused his " death ; and he gave him his blessing as well as me. " My mother was very desirous that the whole family " should pass the night with my father : but he opposed it, observing to her how much he needed some " hours of repose and quiet. She asked, at least, to " be allowed to see him next morning, to which he " consented. But, when we were gone, he requested " that we might not be permitted to return, as our " presence afflicted him too much. He then remained " with his confessor till midnight, when he went to " bed*." Will it be believed that cruelty and falsehood could be carried so far, and that the taste and feeling of a nation could be so vitiated and corrupt, that a public body should feel authorized to promulgate a false and burlesque narrative of this affecting interview : but the account published by the Commune was, that the commissioners proposed that his family should see him in his apartment, to which he agreed. " The interview lasted two hours and a half, " and the conversation was very warm. After the " family had retired, he told the commissioners that he " had given his wife a good scolding†."

In performing the pious duties which his office enjoined, the virtuous and excellent Abbé Edgeworth underwent, with the dignified composure of a Christian minister, all the indignities and insults which low insolence, mixed with ostentatious infidelity, could inflict. He was not allowed to wear his proper vestments, as that was against law : his pockets were rudely searched,

The Abbé Edgeworth insulted.

* The Duchess of Angoulême, Royal Memoirs, p. 199.

† Qu'il avoit fait une bonne mercuriale à sa femme.—Moniteur de 23 Jan. 1793, p. 113

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his snuff-box examined, on the suspicion that it might contain poison, and his pencil-case, as it might conceal a stiletto. At their first meeting, the King read to him, twice over, the will he had drawn up on the day of his appearance in the Convention*. After his farewell to his family, he was anxious to receive the sacrament, but feared the obstructions which would be interposed by the commissioners. Nor did he miscalculate: on Edgeworth's first application, one of them said, "There are examples in history of "priests who have mixed poison with the host." Suppressing his indignation at this reflection, he calmly replied, "I have been sufficiently searched to "satisfy you; but, to obviate all doubts, you your- "selves may furnish me with the bread." The council, at length, agreed to the request; but the ceremony was to conclude before seven o'clock the next morning. The King received the boon with gratitude; prostrated himself in thanksgiving to God, made his preparatory confession, and duly received the holy communion.

21st.
Murder of the
King.

On this day, the last of his existence, Louis rose at five o'clock, and, having performed his religious devotions, awaited, with firmness, the hour of his fate; but even in this short interval he was doomed to experience new displays of insolence and brutality. To one of the guards he addressed some request, and the answer, instead of a simple denial or decent excuse, was, "That might have been well enough, citizen, "when you were a King, but that's not the case now." The commissioners arrived at half an hour after eight, accompanied by a constitutional priest, named Jaques Roux. To this man, Louis presented a packet, requesting he would deliver it to the Commune; but the brutal ecclesiastic answered, "It is my duty to con- "duct you to the place of execution, and nothing more." The King having passed a short time in private with

* Twenty-sixth of December, St. Stephen's day. The King was induced to make his will on this day, from its having been suggested that the day dedicated to the first Christian martyr was further to be rendered memorable by the destruction of himself.

Mr. Edgeworth, who, in defiance of danger, persisted in accompanying him, returned into the room he had left, where Santerre was waiting for him, and, in a firm tone, pronounced the word, *Marchons!* Two commissioners, Jaques Roux, and another constitutional priest, named Jaques Claude Bernard, entered the coach. Two ill-looking fellows, belonging to the gend'armes, stood at the door. One of them entered the carriage; the King followed, with Edgeworth, and the other gend'arme placed himself by his comrade. It is not to be doubted that these men were instructed to murder the King if any movement of the people had appeared in his favour.

During his progress to the place of execution, a profound silence prevailed among the people. The escort consisted of twelve hundred men, being twenty-five from each section of Paris, selected as tried patriots, and expert in military discipline. All the streets were, besides, crowded with national guards. The doors of most of the houses were shut, and the police had strictly forbidden any one to appear at the windows. As the progress was extremely slow, the King asked Edgeworth for a prayer-book. The Abbé had none but his breviary, which he gave him, pointing out those psalms which were most proper in his situation. The King continued reading with great devotion till he came to the foot of the guillotine, erected between the pedestal which had supported the statue of Louis the Fifteenth and the Champs Elisées. The executioner having tied his arms behind, he ascended the scaffold, and the good Abbé, as if by inspiration, uttered the celebrated apostrophe—"Louis, "offspring of St. Louis, ascend into heaven."

When on the scaffold, Louis began to address the people; but had only uttered a few words, expressing his innocence and forgiveness of his persecutors, when, by order of Santerre, the drums beating, drowned his voice; he was placed under the fatal engine, and executed in two minutes after his arrival at the spot. As soon as the act was done, the people, who had hitherto maintained a profound silence, exclaimed

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His burial.

“Vive la republique!” A troop of young men, placed for the purpose, commenced a dance round the scaffold. A youth, between eighteen and twenty years of age, caught up the bleeding head, and, brandishing it with ferocious exultation, cried “Vive la nation!” Several persons dipped the points of pikes, pieces of paper, and pocket handkerchiefs, in the blood. The King’s hair, which had been cut off before he ascended the scaffold, was bought in small parcels for considerable sums. These latter actions are such as might, in some, proceed from mere curiosity, or a worse motive; in others, they were undoubtedly the genuine display of loyalty, veneration, and pity. The theatres were shut in the evening; and the whole city appeared the residence of confusion and dismay. On the day of the execution, an old servant of his father, named Le Duc, addressed a letter to the Convention, praying for leave to inter him at Sens, with the rest of his family. This request was refused, on the motion of Chabot, who said that Louis ought to be buried with other citizens, in the cemetery of the section where he last resided. Legendre moved that he might be permitted to cut up the body into eighty-four pieces, and send one to each of the departments, and the heart to the Convention*. The King’s body was thrown, without ceremony, into a space in the church-yard of Saint Mary Magdalen, which was filled with quick-lime, carefully guarded till the body was supposed to be entirely decomposed, and then levelled with the circumjacent ground, that every trace of the spot where the monarch was deposited might be effectually obliterated.

Character of
Louis.

M. De Malesherbes could not be brought to renounce the hope that a returning sense of honour and justice in the Convention, or a spontaneous effort of the people, would avert from the country the disgrace of executing the sentence; but when he was informed that the tragedy was consummated, he poured forth invectives against the revolution, and eulogies upon its victim, in such a strain of sublime eloquence, that you might have imagined, the Abbé Edgeworth said, that

* Debates. Robespierre à ses Commettans, tome i. p. 234. Eloge, p. 304,

you were listening to Mr. Burke*. Had the French, he observed, been worthy of such a king, they would have acknowledged him as the best they ever had. This eulogy, well accounted for by the warm feelings of the speaker, is much overstrained. Had it been said that Louis was the best man who had ever been king of France, the assertion might have been received with nearly general acquiescence: the virtues he possessed, unalloyed by any vice, would have entitled him to the whole effect of the praise, and it would hardly have been dimmed by any comparison with his predecessors. But the virtues which constitute an excellent individual, do not by themselves make a good king. It is the duty of a sovereign, not merely to encourage the good, but to restrain, coerce, and punish the wicked. The sentiment upon which this unhappy monarch prided himself, that he would suffer no blood to be shed in his cause, however amiable in sound, is defective in wisdom. Had a little timely resistance been made in the early stages of the revolution, torrents of blood, which were afterward poured out in all parts of France, without glory and without advantage to any, would have been spared; and had Louis possessed the true greatness which, in a royal mind, is real goodness, he would have repelled the insolent pretensions of demagogues on the one hand, while he abated and restrained the overweening pretensions and too rigid adherence to oppressive rights and unjust exemptions which were advanced on the other. Deficient in the qualities necessary to fill this dignified and difficult part, his conduct was marked by such contradictions, that his enemies found no difficulty in establishing against him the charge of insincerity and duplicity. He loved virtue, yet the vicious were readily admitted to his presence and favour. He despised profusion, yet his court displayed constant scenes of excess. He was ready to renounce all unjust privileges, and to diminish the burthens on the people; yet, when he presented himself to the States General for the purpose of forwarding such measures, the daz-

* Bertrand's Private Memoirs, vol. iii. p. 278.

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zling splendour of his court and the arrogance of his courtiers were calculated to make a directly opposite impression. Firmness and courage are the striking characteristics of a good king; but the courage of Louis never led to, nor was calculated to support, energetic conduct, or useful enterprise; it was shewn only in a contempt of personal danger, and a superiority to menaces: in this form, his courage was construed into insensibility; his firmness into obstinacy. But it is also just to observe, that the circumstances in which he was placed were so new, that experience, or any judgment formed on the experience of others, could not avail him. Advisers were so numerous, so specious, so contradictory, and so unsuccessful, that it is not wonderful that he is censured by so many writers for not adhering to their plans. His conduct, from the time his trial commenced till the moment which terminated his existence, formed a picture of excellence almost surpassing humanity, and demonstrates the transcendent benefits of that religious purity which takes the sense of shame from premeditated ignominy, which deprives cruelty of its venom, and death of its sting. His fall, the means by which it was brought about, and the persons by whom it was finally effected, unite to form one of the most impressive lessons that history can produce, to shew the natural progress from extravagant and incautious reform to revolution, republicanism, and regicide.

Effect of the
execution of
Louis.

Such an event produced the feelings of horror and compassion which might be expected among the nations of Europe*. A general mourning was assumed, as if the murdered monarch had belonged to each of the countries. In England, the feeling was general; and perhaps fewer instances occurred than ever were known, in a case of great public feeling, to prevent it from being termed universal. In France, the blow was felt for a moment; but soon the rage of factions, the excitements of military enterprise, and a strict system of terror, suspicion, and coercion, added to the

* See a Letter from Mr. Gibbon to Lady Elizabeth Foster, *Miscellaneous Works*, vol. ii. p. 483, 8vo.

levity of the people, enabled them to regain their accustomed state. An incident, by whom planned, or for what purpose is unknown, helped to produce this effect. On the day of the King's execution, Le Pelletier de St. Fargeau, a member of the Convention, who had voted for his death, was stabbed in a tavern, by a person who called himself Paris, and was supposed to have been one of the gardes du corps. He escaped, and is said to have destroyed himself; but nothing was discovered which could throw any light on the transaction. The representative was far too insignificant to attract peculiar notice, or draw down exemplary vengeance. He is termed, by a female revolutionary writer, a silly, rich man (*homme foible et riche**); but his body was made an exhibition; his funeral a show; his supposed last words were selected as a sort of text; he was enshrined in the Pantheon; commemorative feasts were given in the departments; a section of Paris and a ship of war received his name, and his picture and bust were displayed in every commune of the republic†.

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Murder of Le
Pelletier.

24th.

* Madame Roland, *Appel à l'impartiale Posterité*, tome ii. p. 71.

† All the facts here recorded are to be found in *Lacrételle*, tome ii. c. 115; *Thiers*, tome iii. c. 6 and c. 7; *Bertrand's Private Memoirs*, vol. iii. c. 28, p. 200, to the end of the volume; *Eloge historique et funèbre de Louis 16*, par M. Montjoye, cinquieme partie, p. 241, to the end of the volume; *Journal de Cléry*, p. 134, et seqq.; *Letters from the Abbé Edgeworth to his Friends*, p. 90, et seq.; *Biographical Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 96 to 144; vol. ii. p. 1 to 11; art. *Pelletier*: the *Histories*, *Annual Registers*, and the *Moniteur* from day to day.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTIETH.

1792—1793.

Probability of a war with France. — Supposed partiality of the French to England. — Real views of France. — Mission of MM. Chauvelin and Talleyrand. — Pacific conduct of England. — Officers prohibited from serving in the Allied Armies. — Feelings of Mr. Pitt. — Recall of Earl Gower. — Le Brun's letter on the occasion. — Conduct of Chauvelin and Talleyrand. — Address of the English in Paris on the 10th of August. — Addresses from English societies—well received by the Convention. — Another address — Answer of the President. — Decree of Fraternity. — Speech of Grégoire. — Qualification of the decree refused. — Address of the Constitutional Society. — Address of a dinner party in Paris. — Other addresses. — Eulogy of atheism. — Armament in France—countermanded. — Augmentation of the French navy. — Letter of Lord Auckland to the United Provinces — answer. — Decree for opening the Scheldt—its effect in Holland. — Feelings of the English Government. — Hostility of the French to all established governments—toward England. — Le Brun's Report. — Letter of Menge. — Speech of Kersaint. — An English Vessel fired at. — Negotiation of the French with America. — Invasion of Holland ordered. — French agents in London. — M. Chauvelin. — M. Maret. — M. Chauvelin's note to Lord Grenville — Observations — Answer. — Continued Correspondence — on the Alien Bill—on the Exportation of Grain—Answer. — Fresh Note on the Alien Act. — Proceedings in the Convention. — Brissot's Report. — Decree. — Note of the Executive Council, delivered by M. Chauvelin—Answer. — Letter of M. Chauvelin—Answer. — Chauvelin dismissed—but first recalled by his own Government. — Attempts at Negotiation.

—Conference proposed.—M. Maret goes to London.—No conference takes place.—Preparations for war.—Report of the Committee of General Defence.—War declared against England and Holland.—The King's message to Parliament.—Address in the House of Commons—opposed—supported—carried without a division.—In the Lords.—Protests.—Observations.

BEFORE Parliament was adjourned, war between Great Britain and France was considered probable by all, inevitable by many, and by some as actually declared and commenced. No hostile act or announcement of the English government could be assigned as the cause of ill-will between the two countries; but the gradual growth of dissatisfaction, of mutual distrust, and, at last, of hostile rancour, could plainly be perceived and clearly traced.

Notwithstanding the evidence of daily declarations and frequently recurring facts, it was by some asserted in Parliament, and inculcated through a portion of the press, that the French were amicably or rather affectionately inclined toward the English nation. For some time before the revolution, an affectation, introduced by the Duke of Orléans, had prevailed, of copying English manners, wearing English habiliments, and pursuing English amusements. This was called *Anglomanie*; but it only applied externally to matters of fashion and of personal and social enjoyment; if a further consequence were assigned, it could only be derived from a hope that the frankness of manner and disregard of form, which characterized the dress, amusements, and general manners of this country, would be contrasted with the more rigid observances which had before prevailed in the polished societies of the French capital, and, by diminishing their importance, bring them into contempt. English literature was more extolled than studied, and the names of Locke and other authors were familiarly referred to by many who knew nothing of them, but from some quaint, epigrammatic quotation by a modern favourite,

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or who had only a general notion that they had opposed government. In fact, the feelings engendered by a long course of rivalry were never suppressed, hardly ever intermitted. The praises bestowed, in public speeches, on the English nation never pointed to the King, the Royal Family, or the ministers ; they were always directed exclusively to those who most vigorously supported the opposition. At the beginning of the revolution, the word, at least, formed a supposed link of connexion between the histories of the two countries ; but the word was all. In every thing which related to the crown, the nobility, the church, and landed property, the systems of the two countries were diametrically opposed ; the only aim of the French was to destroy ; ours to preserve and protect, although we might find it necessary to define, limit, and restrain.

The hopes of effecting the ruin of Great Britain in power and credit, by the severance from us of the American colonies and the growth of the national debt, had not only failed, but the projected evil had recoiled on France herself. She had seen her commerce enervated, her public pecuniary establishments failing, her financial resources suppressed, and finally her government reduced to impotency, staggering under the weight of a debt, or deficit, hardly equivalent to the amount of a temporary armament, or of the regular taxation of one quarter of a year in England. When party declaimers and writers in France extolled the state of Great Britain, it was for the purpose of exciting unfounded hopes, or of making vexatious comparisons ; they were in no manner desirous of bringing the political or social system of the two countries to any effective similarity. Almost at the beginning of its sittings, when Mirabeau presented to the consideration of the tiers état a work translated by Dumont, containing an account of the forms and manner of proceeding in the House of Commons, it was rejected with disdain ; the Assembly exclaiming, “ We are not “ Englishmen ; we want nothing English*.”

* Dumont, *Souvenirs sur Mirabeau*, p. 144. The author gives some other instances, and they might easily be multiplied.

In the early days of the Revolution, the spirit of hostility could not be displayed in acts of aggression ; and therefore France made no effective demonstrations in favour of Spain during the dispute respecting Nootka Sound* ; and the want of power, not of inclination, prevented her assisting Tippoo in his recent war. By means more certain, by a democratic revolution, which should overthrow the Constitution, and with it the glory and prosperity of the nation, the ruin of England was meditated, and the project always fondly cherished, in France. For this purpose, all the leaders aimed at separating the nation from the government, and afforded encouragement and hopes to every class and body of men who claimed powers or affected sentiments which could be considered as making them a society distinct from the general government : of the proceedings produced by this spirit, instances have already been mentioned†.

Continual displays of this kind proved that such conduct was not suddenly inspired or hastily adopted, but the result of views long entertained, and a system steadily pursued. The mission of M. Chauvelin to England, with the character of ambassador, but avowedly as a mere political puppet in the hands of M. de Talleyrand, was an act far exceeding the double diplomacies and secret instructions usually employed ; and perhaps, until this time, it had hardly been known that a minister, in announcing his mission, stated that he was incapable of asserting a principle, or making an engagement, unless it were sanctioned by another, who came with him, unshackled by any responsibility, undistinguished by any public character ; yet, in the credentials given to M. Chauvelin, signed by his sovereign, it is said, “ If I do not give the same rank ” (that of ambassador) “ to the minister whom I have sent, you “ will, nevertheless, perceive, that by associating in the “ mission with him M. de Talleyrand, who by the letter “ of the Constitution can sustain no public character, “ I consider the success of the alliance, in which I wish

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Real views
of France.

Mission of
MM. Chauve-
lin and
Talleyrand.

* See Chapter 67 ; *Mémoires d'un Homme d'État*, t. ii, p. 154.

† Chapter 69.

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“you to concur with as much zeal as I do, as of the “highest importance*.” This mission was a contrivance organized by Dumouriez and the Jacobin cabinet, in consequence of the jealousies subsisting among them. M. Chauvelin, although young and unknown in politics, resented the degraded situation in which he was to be placed. Talleyrand was suspected, even by those who employed him; and a large party, consisting, among others, of Dumont, Durouveray, Gallois, Reinhart, and Garat, were commissioned to watch over and report upon the conduct of the two principals†. As the composition and intent of this mission must have been well known to ministers, it cannot occasion surprise that Chauvelin and Talleyrand were received with cautious civility, without an affectation of cordiality. In their interview with the King, they found him polite, frank, and sincere, but extremely guarded and laconic; at court, their reception was such as the Bishop of Autun had a right to expect from a pious and virtuous sovereign: the King and Queen treated them with the respect due to the envoys of a friendly power, but without the least show of regard or conciliatory kindness. The public viewed them with corresponding sentiments; not encouraged at the houses of ministers, they sought the society of those peers and members who were most strenuous and least reserved in opposition, and even descended a step lower, by seeking the society of Thomas Paine, and others who professed his sentiments. A newspaper, devoted to the opposition, espoused the cause of the mission, loading its members with inflated and unmerited praises; other papers took the adverse part, and cast on them unmeasured abuse and calumny. Such was the effect of these efforts, that when the embassy attended in a body, at public places of fashionable resort, they were shunned in a remarkable and humiliating manner‡.

Yet, notwithstanding all this public distaste, the

* Rivington's Annual Register, vol. xxxiv, part. 2, p. 257.

† Dumont, Souvenirs de Mirabeau, &c. p. 294. *Mémoires d'un Homme d'État*, t. ii. p. 112.

‡ Dumont, Souvenirs sur Mirabeau, &c. p. 300. *Homme d'État*, tom. ii. p. 125.

resolution to preserve peace was so strongly and so frequently expressed, both at audiences and in a royal proclamation, that the French government was not only satisfied, but gave credit to M. Chauvelin for removing, by his frank and enlightened zeal, the many obstacles which had been raised by previous ministers; and to M. de Talleyrand, for the prudent address which had always so fortunately aided his patriotism*. The English government had given proof of its sincerity, by prohibiting, at the request of the French, all officers and soldiers from entering into the armies of the allies, or interfering in any manner in the war†. It was obvious that Mr. Pitt could not desire a war, which would retard, if not altogether frustrate, the great objects to which his ministerial attention had been directed. His ambition was, to restore confidence, extend commerce, diminish the public burthens, and provide for the extinction of the national debt; while he carefully protected the colonies we possessed, and resolutely maintained the dignity of the nation. In these objects, his success had been beyond hope; and so much was he attached to their accomplishment, that his censors reproached him for incapacity to conduct a war, alleging that his abilities in that way were limited to a pompous declaration, or an ostentatious, but useless, armament.

Although the sympathies of the King in the misfortunes and sufferings of Louis were well known and undisguised, the conduct and declarations of government never varied. When the dethronement of the French King rendered it necessary to recall the Earl of Gower, the temperate manner and judicious instructions afforded to the French government no ground of offence, nor to the opposition party in England any topic of censure. In his official answer to the note of Lord Grenville, the French minister, Le Brun, said not a word on the feeling expressed toward the deposed monarch; but flattered the enlightened and high spirited English nation on their revolution, which as-

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Pacific conduct of England.

Officers prohibited from serving in the allied armies. May 25.

Feelings of Mr. Pitt.

Recall of Earl Gower.

Aug. 17.

Le Brun's Letter.

* Homme d'État, ib.

† Marsh's History of the Politics of Great Britain and France, vol. i. p. 36.

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sured to them liberty and glory. They had been the first to establish the principle of national sovereignty, by substituting the empire of the laws, the expressed will of all, to the arbitrary caprice of an individual, and to afford the example of subjecting kings themselves to this salutary yoke. He declared the hope of the executive council that an entire reciprocity would be felt, and that nothing would alter the good understanding between the people of the two countries. This letter has been justly considered as a part of the system regularly pursued by France of treating the English government as entirely separate from the people*. Neutrality was still promised and rigidly maintained, and M. Chauvelin and his prompter, M. de Talleyrand, were permitted to retain their equivocal station in London, not as acknowledged envoys or ambassadors, but as individuals known to have a certain public relation with another country, yet not formally acknowledged or accredited in this.

Conduct of
Chauvelin and
Talleyrand.

It was believed, and not without apparent foundation, that these agents, with the assistance of other emissaries, were actively engaged in inflaming a revolutionary spirit, and exciting a disposition to commotion, in the people. During their residence, the cheap and often gratuitous diffusion of seditious tracts, a measure which could not be effected without a considerable pecuniary supply, was carried on to an enormous extent; and the societies identified their cause more and more with that of the French, whether mere revolutionists, or republicans and regicides.

Address of the
English in
Paris.

Aug. 14.

If the ill success of the invasion inspired the leaders of France with confidence, and buoyed up their most extravagant hopes and pretensions, the effects on their English adherents was no less striking and conspicuous. Soon after the invasion of the Tuileries, certain Englishmen,—their number or quality is not mentioned,—were admitted to the bar of the Assembly, and having congratulated the French on the energy they had displayed in reconquering their liberty, presented a

* *Mémoires d'un Homme d'État*, tome i. p. 127. The letter is in the *Moniteur*, du 26 Aout, 1792, No. 239, p. 1012.—*Debrett's State Papers*, vol. i. p. 233.

subscription of one thousand three hundred and fifteen livres (£55) for the relief of the widows and orphans occasioned by the conflict. This homage was received with loud applause, honourable mention was made, and a copy of the proceedings transmitted to the donors*.

But when the societies in England had been encouraged or stimulated into audacity, when the views of France on all European governments had been more distinctly announced, and when their military success had inspired them with confidence, a language distinct in its threatenings, and undisguised in the application of them, was ostentatiously and unsparingly used.

An address was presented, purporting to proceed from certain societies in Manchester, Norwich, and elsewhere, supposed to be signed by five thousand persons, and authenticated by Maurice Margarot and Thomas Hardy; it professed to be sent from an oppressed portion of mankind, who, forgetting their own evils, and sensible only of theirs, addressed fervent prayers to the God of the universe to favour the cause of the French, with which their own was so intimately connected. Their number would appear small when compared with that of the nation; but it was daily increasing: "the reign of ignorance," they said, "inseparable from that of despotism, is vanishing; and, at present, all men ask each other, what is liberty? What are our rights? Frenchmen, you are already free; but Britons are preparing to be so. Endeavouring to discover our cruel enemies, we have found them in the partisans of that destructive aristocracy by which our bosom is torn, an aristocracy which has hitherto been the bane of all the countries of the earth. You have acted wisely in banishing it from France. We cannot, from a sense of our duty as citizens and friends to good order, take up arms to assist you. Our government has pledged the national faith that it will remain neuter. In the struggle of liberty against despotism, shall Britons remain neuter? Oh, shame! but having given our king discretionary powers, we must obey; our hands are fettered, but

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Addresses
from English
societies.

Nov. 7.

* *Moniteur* de 17 Aout, p. 984.

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“ our hearts are free; and they are with you. We see, without concern, that the Elector of Hanover unites his troops to those of traitors and robbers; but the King of England will do well to remember, that England is not Hanover; should he forget this, we will not forget it. A triple alliance, not of crowned heads, but of the people of America, France, and Great Britain, will give liberty to Europe and peace to the world*.”

Well received
by the Con-
vention.

Considering the state of proceedings against the King, this address spoke very intelligibly the minds and views of its authors, and, in an ordinary position of public affairs, it would be difficult to conceive that a legislative body would receive, from any portion of a nation, such a violent, unqualified, and contumelious declaration against their own sovereign and government; the Convention accepted it with approbation, and ordered that copies should be sent to the armies and to all the departments.

Another ad-
dress.
10th.

A society at Newington also presented an address, congratulating the French on their valour, which had insured success to their cause; their wise decrees, which had enlightened Europe, and, like the rays of the sun, would enlighten the four parts of the world. “ It is with the warmest and most profound sensibility,” the addressers said, “ that we behold the success of your arms, in your undertaking to deliver from slavery and despotism the brave nations which border you; how holy is the humanity which prompts you to break their chains!” In giving an answer to these addresses, the President observed, that the English were the only nation which had testified sentiments of fraternity to three successive assemblies of the representatives of the French nation†. As neither the King nor the legislature had testified any such sentiments, this declaration is a fresh proof of the anxiety to create a supposed nation entirely separate from the government.

Answer of the
President.

* *Moniteur* du 8 Nov. 1792, p. 1328. Rivington's A. R. 1792, *State Papers*, 344.

† *Moniteur* du 12 Nov. 1792, p. 1345. Rivington's *Annual Register*, *State Papers*, p. 346.

If the answer to the addresses, and the manner in which others were received, could leave a doubt of the eagerness of the French to interfere in the domestic affairs of any other country, to which they should be invited by the presence, or the hope, of a popular insurrection, a bold and uncompromising decree dissipated all illusion on the subject. A discussion was introduced by a motion relative to the protection of the people of Mayence, and, after a very few observations, the Convention decreed, in the name of the French nation, that they would grant fraternity and assistance to all people who wished to recover their liberty: and they charged the executive power to send the necessary orders to the generals, to give assistance to such people, and to defend all citizens suffering in the cause of liberty; and the decree was ordered to be translated and printed in all languages*. This decree Mr. Burke very justly described as a declaration of war against Great Britain†.

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Decree of
fraternity.

Nov. 19.

Another opportunity of expressing similar sentiments was soon obtained; on the reception of a deputation from the National Assembly of Savoy, or, as their orator called them, of the Allobroges, the Abbé Grégoire, from the president's chair, said: "It was a glorious day for the universe when the National Convention of France pronounced these words, 'Royalty is abolished!' From that new era multitudes shall date their political existence. Since the first establishment of societies, Kings have been in open revolt against nations; but nations are now beginning to exert their collective strength for crushing kings. Reason, which shines forth from every part, reveals eternal truths; she unrolls the great charter of the rights of man, that appaller of des-

Speech of
Grégoire.
Nov. 21.

* *Moniteur du 20 Novembre, 1792, p. 1379.* Rivington's Annual Register, 356. It is worthy of observation, that, in the same sheet of the *Moniteur* which contains this decree, there is an article, derived from another paper called *Le Republicain*, headed with an extract from the speech of Saint Just against the King, "It is impossible to reign innocently" (*On ne peut regner innocemment*), lauding it as a grand and eternal truth, simply expressed; and recommending to all their brothers, missionaries of liberty and of the insurrection of the people against tyranny, to publish it in their papers, and to exhibit it in capital letters.

† *Debates, Dec. 28.* See also *Mémoires d'un Homme d'État, tome ii, p. 147.*

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“ pots. Like gunpowder, the more liberty is com-
 “ pressed, the more terrible is its explosion. It will
 “ soon explode in both the worlds, to overturn thrones,
 “ which will be swallowed up in the sovereignty of the
 “ people. The respectable islanders who were our
 “ masters in the social arts, are become our disciples;
 “ and, treading in our steps, soon shall the high spirited
 “ English strike a blow which shall resound to the ex-
 “ tremity of Asia. France, enslaved, was heretofore
 “ the asylum of dethroned princes: France, free, is
 “ become the support of dethroned sovereigns. She
 “ now declares, by the organ of her representatives,
 “ that she will act, as in a common cause, with all
 “ people who resolve to shake off their bondage and
 “ obey themselves alone*!” When the shouts of ap-
 plause with which this speech was received subsided,
 it was decreed, on the motion of Barrère, that it
 should be translated into all languages, as the ma-
 nifesto of nations against kings.

Qualification
of the decree
refused.

As no expression or act which could be construed
 into an actual or intended departure from the most
 rigid rule of neutrality had hitherto proceeded from
 England, and as it was known, as well from the de-
 bates in Parliament, as by other means, that the tenor
 of this decree was viewed with dissatisfaction, M. Ba-
 railion, hoping to mitigate its effect, moved that it
 should be amended, by limiting its operation to “ all
 “ tyrants with whom France might be at war;” but
 the Convention declared that there was no ground for
 deliberation, and passed to the order of the day†.

Dec. 24.

Address of the
Constitutional
Society
received.

Nov. 28.

Before this period, the Convention had shewn so
 openly and unequivocally their hostility to the English
 government, that a mere qualifying phrase in a decree
 could not have been expected to denote amity, or even
 forbearance. John Frost and Joel Barlow, in pursuance
 of their deputation from the Constitutional Society,
 presented at the bar the address authenticated by
 Lord Semphill and Dr. Towers. After congratulating
 them on the glorious victory of the tenth of August,

* *Moniteur* du 23rd Nov. 1792, p. 1390.—A. R. p. 356.

† *Moniteur* du 25th Decembre, 1792, p. 1532.—*Annual Register*, p. 356.

which had prepared the way for a constitution to be established on the basis of nature and reason; and, speaking of the advance of French principles among the neighbouring nations of the Continent, the address proceeded to describe the state of England, where the hand of oppression had not yet ventured completely to ravish the pen from them, or to attack France openly, and contained much bombastic nonsense about the sparks of liberty preserved in England, the aurora borealis, the stronger light, image of the real aurora which shone forth from the bosom of the American republic and the French revolution, which beamed forth in the full fervor of a meridian sun of Europe, the practical result of the principles which philosophy had shewn in the shade of meditation, and which experience every where confirms. On all sides, its influence was dispelling the clouds of prejudice, revealing the secrets of every kind of despotism, and creating expectations that other nations would soon follow in this career, and, rising from their lethargy, arm themselves for the purpose of claiming the rights of man with an all-powerful, irresistible voice. One of the deputies declared that innumerable societies were forming in England; and it would not be extraordinary, if, in a very short time, the French should send addresses of congratulation to an English National Convention. In conclusion, he said, the society they represented had sent one thousand pair of shoes, to be presented as a patriotic gift to the soldiers of liberty, and the society would send one thousand pair a week for the six next weeks. Trifling as this gift must appear, in proportion to the wants of the receivers, it manifestly exceeded the utmost power of the donors: the proposed supply of shoes, at a moderate computation, could not cost less than fourteen hundred pounds, a sum of which, probably, one-tenth part was never in the hands of their treasurer; and those in the secrets of the French government might know, that if they were to receive the tribute, they must supply the fund for its payment. The address, the speech, and the shoes

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were received with equal acclamations; the deputies were invited to the honours of the sitting, the President terming them the spirited children of a nation which had been celebrated through the two hemispheres, and afforded illustrious examples to the universe; assured them that the shades of Penn, of Hampden, and of Sydney, were hovering over their heads, and the moment was, without doubt, approaching, in which the French would bring congratulations to the National Convention of Great Britain. The speech, the answer, and the address, were ordered to be printed and sent to all the departments, and translated into all languages.

Address of a
dinner party
at Paris.

On the same day, a party of Englishmen, Scotchmen, and Irishmen, who had dined together at an hotel in Paris, and whose names, to the number of fifteen, were published, with the appendage of many others who were not named, to celebrate the triumph of the French arms, and who established, as a primary proposition, that men were not born to hate and murder each other at the command of robbers and assassins, whom the folly and cowardice of mankind dignified with the name of kings, and the ministers of kings, presented themselves with an address before the Convention. "Hitherto," they said, "wars have been
"undertaken only to satisfy the ambition or the pride
"of despots; but you have taken up arms to make
"reason and liberty triumph. We hope that the
"troops of liberty will not lay them down while
"either tyrants or slaves remain. Nations, enlightened
"by your example, blush at having so long bowed
"their servile heads under a yoke degrading to human
"nature." They received an answer in strict conformity with their sentiments. "You are here," the President said, "in the midst of your brethren; nature and principles draw towards us England, Scotland, and Ireland. Let the cries of friendship resound
"through the two republics; the wishes you have now
"formed for the liberty of nations will be realized.
"Royalty in Europe is either destroyed, or on the

“ point of perishing on the ruins of feodality, and the
“ declaration of rights, placed by the side of thrones,
“ is a devouring fire which will consume them*.”

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Other addresses were presented from different parts of Great Britain, and from Limerick in Ireland, and all were received with equal expressions of satisfaction, accompanied with denunciations against kings and nobles†. In the course of the proceedings against the dethroned monarch, similar sentiments were continually expressed, and not unfrequently pointed at the English government. In a speech on public education, in answer to some observations by Durand Millane, Dupont considered the extinction of monarchy as a necessary and certain prelude to the denial of a Deity and the abrogation of all worship. “ What!” he exclaimed, “ thrones are overturned; sceptres broken; “ kings expire; and yet the altars of God remain!” (Some murmurs and an appeal to order were heard, but he proceeded). “ Tyrants, in outrage to nature, “ continue to burn an impious incense on those altars! “ The thrones that have been subverted, have left these “ altars naked, unsupported, and tottering. A single “ breath of enlightened reason will now be sufficient to “ make them disappear. Nature and reason, these “ ought to be the gods of men! these are my gods! “ Admire nature! cultivate reason! For myself, I “ honestly avow to the Convention—I am an atheist! “ But I defy a single individual, among the twenty- “ four millions of Frenchmen, to make against me any “ well-grounded reproach.” He concluded his raving, by expressing an expectation of the time fast approaching, when philosophers, such as Pétion, Sieyes, and Condorcet, would be seen in the Pantheon, surrounded, like the Greek philosophers at Athens, with a crowd of disciples from all parts of Europe, walking, like the Peripatetics, and so instructing them, that, on their return to their respective countries, they might diffuse

Other
Addresses.

Dec. 14.
Eulogy of
Atheism.

* *Moniteur* ubi supra —A. R. pp. 153-347.

† Many of these addresses appear in Rivington's *Annual Register*, already referred to, and a collection was published in a separate pamphlet.

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the same lights, and operate, for the happiness of mankind, similar revolutions throughout the world*.

Such absurd and bombastic addresses, answers, and ravings, are in themselves far beneath notice; but, proceeding from, and sanctioned by, the only ruling power in France, and connected as they were with the interests of Great Britain, they assume a great degree of importance.

Armament in
France.

July 14.

These proceedings were not in any respect defensive, or coloured by a plea of retaliation; the rulers of France knew and acknowledged the sincerity of our pacific professions. Early in the summer, a small fleet of five sail of the line and a few frigates had sailed from Portsmouth, under Lord Hood, for the mere purpose of performing usual naval evolutions in the channel. France took measures for equipping thirty sail of the line; but such satisfactory explanations were forwarded by M. Chauvelin, that the armament was declared unnecessary. Nor was the recall of Earl Gower, however it was afterward the subject of cavi, deemed, at the time, any departure from the avowed system of amity and neutrality.

Aug. 4.
Counter-
manded.Augmentation
of the French
navy.
Sept. 23.

Pursuing the career opened by her success in the field, France had used every effort to acquire a preponderant naval force. Even before the retreat of the allies, Monge, the minister of marine, had announced to the legislature that one hundred and two tri-coloured flags floated on the deep, of which twenty-one were ships of the line and thirty frigates, beside smaller vessels; and he added, that thirty-four additional ships of the line were ready to be instantly put into commission, and twenty-nine more of the line and forty-one frigates in a progressive state of repair, some ready for immediate service, and the residue nearly so. Great Britain at this time had only sixteen thousand sailors and marines in pay, which were hardly sufficient to man even twelve ships of the line, with the

* *Moniteur* du 16 Dec. 1792, p. 1490; the Collection before mentioned; Rivington's Annual Register. Also, Observations on Dupont's Speech, by Hannah More; and all the periodical works.

proportionate number of frigates, sloops, and cutters. In two months afterward, the Toulon fleet, of fifteen sail of the line, with frigates and other vessels, under Admiral Truguet, harassed the coasts of Piedmont and of other Italian states.

As the French armies advanced, Lord Auckland, the British ambassador at the Hague, had transmitted a note to the States General, declaring that his Majesty, seeing the theatre of war brought so near the frontiers of the republic, and being sensible of the uneasiness which it might naturally occasion, thought it necessary to renew the assurances of his inviolable friendship, and of his determination to execute, at all times, with the utmost good faith, all the stipulations of alliance so happily concluded in 1788. The King did not suppose it probable any of the belligerents would violate their territory, or interfere in their internal concerns; but still recommended that, in concert with him, they should, with unremitted attention and firmness, repress any such attempt. In answer, their High Mightinesses, acknowledging the King's benevolence and fidelity, expressed a firm confidence that no intentions were entertained against them; the strict neutrality which they had observed, and the respect to which the situation of his Majesty and the Republic entitled them, were sufficient to remove any such apprehension.

If this expression of confidence was sincere, it was soon shewn to be unfounded; for, on the very day the letter was written, the French passed their decree for opening the Scheldt, and directed their generals to pursue and combat their enemies, even on the Dutch territory, if there they should seek refuge. A reliance on the zeal of their active, influential, and increasing party, and on their own overbearing force, impelled the French to issue these decrees; but their influence could not prevent a general alarm throughout the provinces, as it was obvious that the execution of them would be utterly destructive of the commerce and welfare of the nation. The States General protested against the decrees, and commissioned the Stadtholder

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November.

Letter of Lord
Auckland to
the United
Provinces.
Nov. 16.

16th.
Answer.

Decree for
opening the
Scheldt.

Its effect in
Holland.

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to order the captain of the guard-ship, which lay at the mouth of the river, to prevent French ships of war from entering it, informing the commanders that, by virtue of treaties, the Scheldt was shut against all armed vessels; but, nevertheless, several ships of war forced a passage, to bombard Antwerp. By this proceeding the French government displayed their general disregard of the rights of other nations, and of treaties to which England was party, and France a guarantee.

Feeling of the
English
government.

It is incorrectly asserted that we were no more interested to prevent the opening of the Scheldt by the French, at this period, than we had been to obstruct the same measure when threatened by the Emperor seven years before*. At that time, peace had been but recently concluded with Holland; we were bound to her by no treaty; Austria not being a maritime power, could not convert the Scheldt into a menacing station; and there was nothing in her proceeding, whether just or unjust toward Holland, which invaded the general rights of nations, abrogated solemn compacts, or threatened the tranquillity of Europe. At the present period every thing was different; the treaty of 1788 bound us to maintain the independence of the Dutch; the French were a considerable maritime power, and being, under whatever form, supreme rulers over the Netherlands, the possession of the Scheldt was, in their hands, a just ground of alarm and irresistible motive to precaution.

Hostile disposition of the
French to all
established
governments.

Such was the state and aspect of affairs at, and immediately after, the meeting of Parliament; but almost every day produced events or declarations which occasioned some change, although the constant current shewed the determination of the French to engage in a war with England, and carried to a remoter distance every reasonable hope of peace. To shew perspicuously the principles on which all their wars were to be conducted, the Convention, faithful, as they said, to the principles of the sovereignty of the people, which

* In 1785. See Chapter 59, vol. iv. p. 182.

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would not permit them to acknowledge any institutions militating against it, decreed, in the most barbarous and tyrannical form that could be devised, that in all countries occupied by their armies, the generals should immediately proclaim the abolition of all existing imposts or contributions; of tithes; of all feudal and manorial rights, fixed or casual; of all real or personal services; of the exclusive right of hunting and fishing; of state labour; of nobility; and, generally, all privileges: and declare to the people, that they brought them peace, succour, fraternity, liberty and equality. They should proclaim the sovereignty of the people, and, suppressing all existing authorities, convoke them in primary assemblies, to create and organize a provisional administration. The generals were forthwith to place under the protection and safeguard of the French republic all property, moveable or immoveable, belonging to the treasury, to the prince, to his voluntary abettors, adherents, or attendants; and to bodies and communities, both civil and religious. And they would treat as enemies the people who, refusing or renouncing liberty and equality, might be desirous of preserving their princes and privileged casts, or of entering into an accommodation with them. Lest it should be supposed that this system of suppressing monarchy, nobility, and all institutions, was confined to the Belgic provinces, or other states which were already invaded or subdued by or incorporated with France, it was distinctly avowed that it was her interest to raise and to acquire the commerce of the Belgic provinces, overborne and neutralized by that of Holland: thence to alarm and menace the United Provinces; to plant assignats in their very counting houses, there to ruin the Bank of England; and, in short, to complete the revolution of the money system. The people of Holland were told that, as they had no church lands to offer as an indemnity, the revolution, as to them, must be one of cash books.

Dec. 15.

Finding the English government prepared to resist aggression and to frustrate insidious attempts, the separation of the people from the government was again

toward
England.

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Dec. 18.
Le Brun's
report.

Letter of
Monge.

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January.
Speech of
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resorted to. In a report to the Convention, Le Brun, the minister for foreign affairs, treated on the recent proceedings of the ministry, the recall of our ambassador after the immortal tenth of August, and the sudden convocation of Parliament; which he attributed to a dread and jealousy of their victories, the entreaties of cowardly rebels, the vile intrigues of hostile courts, and the secret suspicions excited by the numerous addresses from all parts of England. He then noticed, as causes of complaint, the opening of the Scheldt, the decree of the nineteenth of November, and the supposed designs against Holland; and, having made some inconclusive observations on each, he said, "We have authorised M. Chauvelin to embrace every opportunity of assuring the English nation, that, notwithstanding the ill-humour of its government, the French people desire nothing more ardently than to merit its esteem." Monge, the minister of Marine, spoke these sentiments more plainly, and with more precise application to England, when, in a circular to the popular societies in sea-ports, he said: "The English government is arming, and by its encouragement the King of Spain is also preparing to attack us. These two tyrannical powers, after persecuting the patriots on their own territories, expect, no doubt, to influence our judgment on the traitor, Louis. The King and his parliament wish to make war on us. But will the English republicans suffer it? These free men already shew their discontent and repugnance to bear arms against their brethren, the French. Well then! we will fly to their assistance; we will make a descent on that island; we will hurl thither fifty thousand caps of liberty; we will plant there the sacred tree, and stretch out our arms to our brother republicans; the tyranny of their government shall soon be destroyed. May we all be strongly animated with this thought!"

It is possible that, when they made these violent denunciations, the French may have been so far deceived by their emissaries, avowed or secret, as to believe that there was in England a party sufficiently

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numerous and powerful to throw the country into their hands, or, more probably, they were led to an erroneous judgment of their influence in this country by the revolution in their own, where a party, at first small in number and void of importance, had, by activity, audacity, and an unsparing abuse of the press, produced such awful results. Of the existence of a powerful body in their interests, they never entertained a doubt, and they appeared to have considered the invasion, with their cargo of red caps, and grafts from the tree of liberty, certain and easy; their fishing vessels, it was said, would carry over one hundred thousand Frenchmen; by such an expedition, the present disputes would be terminated, and on the ruins of the Tower of London, with the English people no longer duped, should a treaty be signed which would regulate the fate of nations, and form a foundation for the liberty of the world.

This extravagant rodomontade was not the effusion of a journalist, a pamphlet writer, or a club orator; it is extracted from a long, prepared, and carefully digested speech, uttered by Kersaint, an admiral, in the National Convention. His object was to excite the country to a maritime war, and, in doing so, he pointed out all the advantages to be gained by France from the spoliation of England and all her allies; and the small injury that would result to the republic from the possible loss of colonies, always burthensome and expensive, but never profitable. On the state of Great Britain he spoke with equal confidence and ignorance; as well as on the government of Scotland and of Ireland; making a vehement and bombastic apostrophe on the wretched condition of the birth-place of Sydney, and of Milton; where the Tower of London was transformed into a Bastile; where the liberty of the press was invaded, and freedom of opinion banished; where Priestley, the philosopher, was persecuted, Paine proscribed, Cooper and Walker attacked even in their houses, for having dared to think that man was free. He considered Mr. Pitt anxious only to retain that power, by virtue of which he had for eight years

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reigned lord paramount over England; and he described Mr. Fox as the great orator, who, by the force of genius, kept alive the reputation of a party, the last weak supports of the defenders of the liberty of England; the friend of men, the parasite of kings, the vigorous opposer of the English administration, the superstitious admirer of the English constitution, a popular aristocrat, a democratic loyalist; he had but one object in view, that of hurling his rival from his throne, and retrieving at once so many parliamentary defeats, not less injurious to his interest than inimical to his reputation. The motions with which he concluded were generally to lead to a maritime war; they were referred to a committee; but the sentiments contained in the speech were perfectly congenial to the hopes and views of the French: in Europe, the spoliation of England, Spain, Portugal, and Italy; the expulsion of Spain from Mexico, of Holland from the Cape of Good Hope, Batavia, and Ceylon; of Portugal from the Brazils; and of England from India. All these operations were exempt from difficulty; the French could be opposed only by men enervated by luxury—soft beings that would tremble before the soldiers of liberty.

An English
vessel fired at.
January.

Nor were these menaces unaccompanied with acts and negotiations of active hostility. The Childers, sloop of war, cruising off Brest without a flag displayed, came within three quarters of a mile of the port, when a shot was fired from the batteries, which fortunately passed over her without damage. The English flag was immediately hoisted, in answer to which the French displayed the national colours, with a red flag declaratory of war, over them. The sea was calm and the tide setting in shore; the Childers endeavoured, by rowing, to extricate herself from her perilous position; but a cross fire was opened, by signals from the batteries, and the vessel must have been destroyed, had not a breeze providentially sprung up, which enabled her to escape. This attack was of designed and undisguised hostility. It could not be alleged that the French made it from jealousy that the English vessel

was endeavouring to gain information of the state of the port; had that been so, a boat or sloop might have been sent to warn her off, or a single gun, without shot, or so fired as to occasion no danger, would have been consistent with the usage of nations, and fully sufficient; but the display of warlike colours, and the deadly firing which followed, were sufficient to demonstrate that, for so small an advantage as the destruction of a sloop and her crew, the French were ready to commence hostilities without a declaration and without a pretext.

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Hopes were entertained in France that an useful alliance against England might be formed with the United States of America. The heats which had been generated by the late war of the revolution were not so entirely extinguished, but that a little effort might fan them into a consuming flame. The great body of Americans were charmed with the French revolution, which assumed to level orders and abolish those distinctions by which one portion of a community was exalted above another. America had a republican government, and the majority of the people could see nothing but beauty and fitness in a similar system in France. A more considerate and highly influential portion, unswayed by such glaring circumstances, awaited with anxiety the result of these mighty changes, and, although far from hostile to the French government, would not hastily join in measures, or adopt systems, leading to consequences which were, if possible, to be avoided. To America M. Genet was dispatched, with instructions to effect an alliance adverse to Great Britain; nominally defensive, but intrinsically and effectually hostile. As this mission was not known at the time, it had no influence on the immediate proceedings of England.

Negotiation of
the French
with America.

Jan. 3—19.

In order, by the possession of Holland, to effect the ruin and subjugation of Great Britain, a corps of Dutch patriots was taken into the pay of France, under the name of the Batavian Legion, and orders were dispatched to General Miranda, who commanded in the Netherlands, to invade the dominions of Holland

Invasion of
Holland
ordered.

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within twelve days. His proceedings were marked out and his means indicated in a dispatch composed by Dumouriez; and in the execution of this plan, which comprised generally the seizure of Dutch Flanders, including, by name, Zealand, Zuyd-Beveland, Walcheren, Middleberg, the Isle of Cadsand, and Biervliet, promptitude and secrecy were strongly enjoined, and the co-operation of the Dutch patriots confidently promised.

French agents
in London.

M. Chauvelin.

M. Maret.

1792.
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In the midst of these hostile and insidious proceedings, a semblance of a desire to negotiate with England was still maintained. Although, after the recall of Earl Gower, no British ambassador had been sent to Paris, yet the credentials or conduct of M. Chauvelin in London were never investigated, and he was encouraged both by Lord Grenville and Mr. Pitt, to enter into explanations which might tend to the preservation of peace. M. Maret, an agent of the Duke of Orléans, and who came to London solely on his business, pretended to have powers from the French government to treat; and he obtained the appointment of an audience for an unnamed coadjutor of his, to open a discussion with Mr. Pitt, who was desirous to treat with M. Maret as a confidential person from the Executive Council*; but, when they explained themselves, it was discovered that neither had the slightest pretension to a public character, to any mission, or any authority, and that their entire proceeding was an empty piece of presumption, or a deliberate insult on the British cabinet. Far from displaying any irritation at such conduct, the minister advised M. Maret immediately to dispatch a courier to Paris for authority and instructions; but the Executive Council commanded him to abstain from all intercourse with Mr. Pitt on the subject of politics, and to return immediately. The reluctance of the English minister to engage in war was attributed to fear, occasioned by the confidence of the hostile government. M. Maret was known to entertain pacific dispositions, and, if France had confided to him the task of nego-

* For an account of M. Maret, his employment in England, and his intercourse with government, see Miles's Authentic Correspondence, p. 89.

tiation, a tranquil and perhaps satisfactory discussion might have ensued ; but M. Chauvelin was known to be imbued with sentiments more conformable to those which swayed the executive council, and to him was committed the duty of communicating with our ministers.

In a long note to Lord Grenville, he assumed as a proof of the pacific disposition of France, his being allowed to remain in London after the recall of Earl Gower, and complained of the public conduct observed by the British ministry toward his country. The French government, thinking it, he said, their duty to their nation not to leave it longer in a state of uncertainty, authorized him to demand a definitive answer to the question, whether France was to consider England as a hostile power? A false interpretation, he said, was given to the decree of the 19th of November, which was applicable only to those people who, after having conquered their liberty, might request the fraternity and assistance of the French Republic by a solemn and unequivocal expression of the general will. They would not attack Holland while she should confine herself within the bounds of strict neutrality ; but the opening of the Scheldt was a question irrevocably decided by reason and justice. It was, in itself, of little importance, and the British ministry could only avail themselves of it from a private intention to bring about a rupture at any rate, and to avail themselves of the most futile pretences to colour an unjust aggression long meditated. Such a war would really be the war of the British ministry only, against the French Republic ; and should this truth appear for a moment doubtful, it would not perhaps be impossible for France to render it soon evident to a nation which, in giving its confidence, never renounced the exercise of reason, and its respect for justice and truth. Insisting strenuously on the rectitude of the intentions of France and the purity of her views, he cautioned the British ministry to consider the terrible responsibility of a declaration of war, which would incontestably be their work ; the consequences of which must be fatal to both

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M. Chauvelin's
note to Lord
Grenville.

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Lord Grenville's
answer.

countries and to all mankind, and in which a generous and free people could not long consent to betray their own interests by striving to assist and support a tyrannical coalition.

Such apologies for the conduct of France shewed that, to the determination of doing wrong, there was added a total carelessness about truth or consistency, in the vindication of it. The assertion concerning the obnoxious decree was completely refuted by the refusal already mentioned to declare that it had no application to England, and which had taken place only three days before the date of this note. At the time, too, when it was written, the French troops had received orders to pursue and attack the enemy, on whatever territory they should seek refuge, evidently pointing at Holland; and arrangements were making for the invasion of that country, to be forwarded by the aid of those traitors whom they denominated patriots. The tone in which the opening of the Scheldt was maintained, the designation of the ministry as the fomenters of war and enemies of the public good, and the appeal to the people against the acts of government, were too evident and too flagrant to be overlooked or misconstrued.

To the note of M. Chauvelin, Lord Grenville returned a firm and powerful answer. He reminded the writer that, being accredited only from the Most Christian King, he could not be admitted to treat with ministers as the plenipotentiary of France, acting under instructions from the executive council; yet, as he had alluded to circumstances which had afforded strong grounds of uneasiness and jealousy, a clear and distinct explanation should be given. On the statement that the decree of the nineteenth of November did not apply to England, the noble secretary observed, that the application had been shewn unequivocally, by the public reception given to the promoters of sedition in this country, and by the speeches made to them precisely at the time of this decree, and since on several occasions. Neither satisfaction nor security could be found in the terms of an explanation, which still declared to the promoters of sedition in every country

what were the cases in which they might count beforehand on the support and succour of France, and which reserved to that country the right of mixing herself in our internal affairs whenever she might judge it proper, and on principles incompatible with the political institutions of all Europe. On the neutrality of Holland, Lord Grenville observed that, in contradiction to the professions of M. Chauvelin, both the territory and the neutrality of that republic had been invaded by a French officer going up the Scheldt to attack Antwerp, notwithstanding the determination of the government not to grant the passage, and the formal protest by which they opposed it. He animadverted, with just severity, on the decree for opening the Scheldt, as an act contrary to treaties which France had no right to supersede. "England," he said, "will never consent that France shall arrogate the power of annulling, at her pleasure, and under the sanction of pretended natural right, of which she constitutes herself the only judge, the political system of Europe, established by solemn treaties, and guaranteed by the consent of all powers. If France is really desirous of maintaining friendship and peace with England, she must shew herself disposed to renounce her views of aggression and aggrandisement, and to confine herself within her own territory, without insulting other governments, without disturbing their tranquillity, without violating their rights." His lordship expressed the King's sincere desire to maintain a real, solid, and honourable peace; and repelled, in firm, but not angry terms, the intimation of an appeal to the people against the government.

It certainly appears astonishing that this latter notion should have taken such firm possession of the mind of the French agent as to enter into his official correspondence, and, most probably, into that which he maintained with his own government. It may be, that he consulted or depended only on those newspapers and pamphlets which favoured such an opinion, or perhaps, as he had frequent intercourse with Mr.

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Continued
correspond-
ence.1793.
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On the
alien bill.

Fox*, he may have caught up, and misrepresented, some warm and hasty expression of that animated and open speaker, and converted into a political assurance that which was intended only as a firm, unqualified expression of an opinion strongly entertained†.

Some inconclusive correspondence took place between Mr. Miles and M. Maret; but the notes of M. Chauvelin, on several occasions, breathed a spirit which shewed that a wish for war was sure to be speedily gratified. On the introduction of the alien bill, M. Chauvelin wrote a letter of remonstrance, declaring it to be a violation of the treaty of commerce between the two nations, and insisting that the exception it contained in favour of those who should visit this country merely on commercial business was nugatory, because French merchants might frequently find themselves unable to prove that they came to England only for such purposes. The apprehensions on which the bill was founded were treated as utterly groundless. "If some men, cast out from the bosom of France, have spread themselves in Great Britain, with the criminal intention of agitating the people, of leading them to revolt, has not England laws to protect the public order? Could she not punish them? Reproaches so little founded, imputations so insidious, would not justify a conduct so different from that constantly held by France toward Great Britain."

Letter
returned.

As M. Chauvelin styled himself minister plenipotentiary of the French republic, the secretary of state returned his letter, reminding him that he assumed a character in which, as he had before been apprized, he could not be acknowledged.

Jan. 7.
On the
exportation of
grain.

In another letter, M. Chauvelin complained of a proclamation issued in November, forbidding the exportation of grain and flour; and the consequent detention of vessels, by orders from the custom-house.

* Miles, p. 82.

† Thus, it may have occurred, that upon some extravagant measure being suggested, the great opposition leader, with his characteristic openness and boldness, may have exclaimed, "Oh, no, the people will never submit to that," and the Frenchman, misled by his wishes, may have thought that an actual appeal to the people was intended.

He accused the English government of taking advantage of the good faith of the merchants of Europe, and of the security of a neighbouring and friendly nation, to bring into its ports those commodities which it supposed or knew to be necessary ; and if now they should, on the first hostile measures which they might either take or provoke, detain such commodities, in hopes of creating want by exciting the fear of it, they would only obtain, as the reward of their perfidy, even if successful, the shame of having employed means which, even in war, an enlightened and generous nation must abhor, and of having sunk the credit of English commerce, by violating the sacred asylum of its markets.

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To this intemperate communication, Lord Grenville answered only by declining to enter into any new explanations. In a private conversation, he had apprized the writer that ministers would not decline receiving non-official communications, which, without deciding the question either of the acknowledgment of the new government in France, or of receiving a minister accredited by her, might offer the means of removing the misunderstanding which already manifested itself between the two countries ; but France had thought it preferable to bring forward difficulties of form. He did not know in what capacity M. Chauvelin now addressed him.

9th.
Answer.

In this note, the French agent had not assumed any title ; but in his next, he revived the designation of “ minister plenipotentiary of the republic.” The subject was the alien act, which France regarded as a manifest infraction of the commercial treaty, and it was, from thenceforth, to be considered as broken and annulled.

French note on
the alien act.
11th.

When the note, written by Lord Grenville on the 31st of December, was read in the Convention, a cry was uttered, “ This comes from Constantinople ;” and, as if it had been, together with M. Chauvelin’s answer, several days under the consideration of the Committee of General Defence, Brissot, in their name, made a long report, asserting the complaints of the British cabinet to have no foundation ; while the French re-

12th.
Proceedings
in the
Convention.

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Brissot's
report.

public had well-founded complaints to make against the court of Saint James's; and declaring that, having exhausted every means to preserve peace, the interest and the dignity of the nation required a decree for the most vigorous measures to repel the aggression of England. In this report it was stated, that, at the beginning of the revolution, the English nation expressed joy, the Parliament inquietude, and the court terror. The opinion of the nation obliged the ministry to keep silence, and their interest engaged them to observe an exact neutrality, enriched as they were by the war. But, after the immortal day of the tenth of August, their conduct changed; they recalled their ambassador, and did not send one after the meeting of the Convention; a manifest departure from their profession respecting the independence of nations, since it shewed a disapprobation of the abolition of royalty, and consequently a declaration that England meant to interfere in the internal government of France. The report then adverted to the correspondence of Chauvelin, the complaints of England on the decree of the nineteenth of November; and on the emissaries and missionaries employed to spread sedition. Professions of peace were still maintained; but soon the scene changed; Parliament was suddenly convened, troops marched toward London, the Tower was armed, and all these preparations were directed against Paine's Rights of Man. The ministers called upon the zeal of all good Englishmen for assistance; he extolled to the skies the English constitution; and to prove its goodness, he caused all authors and printers who did not think like himself to be arrested, prosecuted at law, and pulled to pieces by his news-writers, and in addresses ordered by the court, and sent by extraordinary messengers into every part of the kingdom. Finally, as if their artillery, their thief-takers, and their tribunals, would not be sufficient to annihilate these unhappy revolutionists, the English ministry supported, in all parts, clubs founded by their pensioners, to preach up the excellence of the English constitution, and declaim against reformers and the French revolution. These

measures answered, and more than answered, all their hopes. They formed a rapid and numerous coalition of all the creatures of the court, of placemen, of nobles, of priests, of rich landholders, of all capitalists, of men who subsisted by abuses; they inundated the newspapers with their protestations of devotion to the English constitution, of horror of the revolution, of hate against anarchists; and made such an impression on public opinion, that, within a very few days, almost all England was on its knees to the ministers, and a violent hate succeeded to the veneration which had before been inspired by the last revolution in France. When Parliament opened, the most revolting idolatry of royalty was manifested; under the veil of respect for the constitution, aristocratic hypocrisy was displayed; there, chivalric extravagance, dagger in hand, played the actor. Yet, in the midst of this panic, great praise was due to Fox, for having dared to move the sending of an ambassador to France; to Sheridan, for having exculpated the nation from those massacres, which were the work of a few villains only; it is due to Erskine, for having dared to defend Thomas Paine, whose effigy was burnt by those who, some time before, had covered his works with incense. Under these circumstances, their ambassador had been directed to lay before the English minister the note of the 27th of December. "We ought here to say," the report continued, "because it is rendering a homage to the genius of liberty which inspires the French, that, in viewing the correspondence of the executive council with the cabinet of Saint James's, we have there marked the superiority of the free man, that is, of the candid, sincere, and just man, over the agent of despotism, whose conceptions are always constrained and equivocal, because his intentions are never pure. You have heard the reply of Lord Grenville to the note of Chauvelin, of which I have spoken. Chicane on the face of it, shuffling in the explanations, and bad faith in the perpetual renewal of complaints, which have been ten times beaten to powder, are all that can be found in it." The affairs of Holland, the

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occupation of Savoy, the opening of the Scheldt, and the other topics which had been most in discussion, were treated on, with vehement eulogy on France, and an equally coarse vituperation of the English ministry; they prostituted, it was said, the character and power of a great nation; and bribery was one of their ordinary tricks; they knew how to save, from the expenses of the marine and war, enormous sums to provide for the incalculable corruption of their creatures. They had given a false interpretation to the proposed appeal to the English nation; their complaints of the indecency with which kings were treated were to be contrasted with the manner in which, in the two houses of Parliament, the ministers and representatives of the French people were spoken of with all possible insolence; they complained against French clubs as governing, when the English minister established his of monarchists to tyrannise — against arbitrary acts, when he himself had established an inquisition against the English and the brothers of France. The junction of Savoy, legitimated by the unanimous vote of all the communes, was more useful to the brave Allobroges than to the French. In the Low Countries they had not made a constitution; but the instructions given to the generals were, to assemble the people, to consult its wish, to protect it while expressing that wish, and to respect it when expressed. “We pillaged Belgium,” said the reporter, “when we wished only a voluntarily re-imbusement of the charges of a war, in which the blood of our brethren is reckoned as nothing! Well does it become a court which has plundered—which still plunders—the East Indies of enormous riches, to hold the inhabitants in chains; well, indeed, does it become such a court to reproach us with demanding a just indemnity for the charges which we have been put to in restoring liberty to our neighbours!” The reception given to the English societies was treated as a matter of no impropriety; but perverse means had been employed to blacken France in the eyes of her English brothers! To the

politicians who still adhered to the old balance of Europe, to the merchants seeking for exclusive markets, they had been pictured like greedy conquerors, wishing to overturn all Europe; as if the French wished to make of the Low Countries a second Bengal! To weak or superstitious minds, they had all been transformed into atheists; because a deputy had made a frank confession of his atheism. To the rigorous presbyterian, it had been said, that they dared to make use of their reason, and that they occupied themselves with the public weal, even on Sundays. To those who still esteemed the French nation, it was said that it was enslaved by a handful of factious men. To those who were friends of the law, and enemies of blood, poignards had been shown, with the exclamation, "See here the religion of the French!" Such were the farces played off—such the lies repeated to alienate the English nation, while means were also taken to irritate the French. Among these was the refusal to send an ambassador, or to acknowledge theirs; the prohibition to export grain, contrary to the treaty of commerce; the act against the circulation of assignats, the alien act, and, finally, the extraordinary armament and augmentation of the land and sea forces. Yet it was said the demonstrations of war were not really serious. Could it be supposed they were, when the English ministry continued negotiations even with those agents whose characters they affected not to acknowledge; when they ordered only an addition of the same number of ships and men as in the pretended preparations against Spain and Russia, forbearing to employ the terrible means of pressing, without which it is said to be impossible for them to equip even an inconsiderable fleet? The report then proceeded to show that France was better prepared for a naval war than England. Before six months should elapse, eighty thousand French sailors, excited by the desire of serving their country, would protect the three-coloured flag; whilst the English cabinet would not, with a monstrous bounty of five pounds sterling, be able to complete its augmentation of nine thousand sailors;

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and, to man a considerable fleet, it would be compelled to recur to an infamous press, and so excite an insurrection which would precipitate its ruin. With equal grossness and incorrectness, all the resources of Great Britain, domestic and colonial, her own forces and her alliances, were vilified. "Yet far be from us," said the report, "in tracing this picture, the wish of afflicting the English nation. We only wish to unmask the phantom of power on which the minister supports himself. As to the nation, we see in it only brothers, and can we wish the destruction of our brothers? but the English nation ought, at last, like us, to seek for its prosperity, not in an exclusive commerce, not in possessions stolen from their proprietors, not in the act of squeezing out the sweat and blood of the labourers and artizans of India, but in a commerce founded on morality, on universal justice, on the free exertions of industry."

Decree.

On this report a decree was founded, for requiring an abandonment of the principles of the alien act; the free exportation of grain; and an explanation of the causes of the late armaments; the Republic reserving to itself, in case of satisfaction being refused on all these points, to take immediately such measures as her interest and safety might require, to repel any aggression.

13th.
Note of the
executive
council de-
livered by M.
Chauvelin.

In conformity with the spirit of this report, and before the decree of the Convention could have been transmitted, M. Chauvelin delivered to Lord Grenville an official note of the executive council, in reply to that of the 4th of December. They gave express assurances of a sincere desire to maintain peace, and the great reluctance with which the republic would see itself forced into a rupture, much more contrary to its inclinations than to its interests. They justified the employment of M. Chauvelin to negotiate, in preference to a secret agent, and alleged the example of Spain, which had allowed to M. Bourgoing, although accredited only in the same manner, the title of Minister plenipotentiary of France. But to remove this obstacle, and that they might not have to reproach themselves with having stopped, by a simple defect in form, a negotiation on the success of which depended the

tranquillity of two great nations, they had sent to Citizen Chauvelin credential letters, which would give him the means of treating according to all the strictness of diplomatic forms. The executive council then repeated observations already made on the decree of the nineteenth of November, and vindicated the opening of the Scheldt, as a matter of little importance, absolutely indifferent to England, and to the Dutch themselves of little consequence, although of the very highest to the Belgians. “To secure the possession of the Netherlands, the Emperor sacrificed the most inviolable rights: he governed those beautiful provinces with a rod of absolute despotism. France, entering into a war with the House of Austria, expels it from the Low Countries, and restores liberty to the people. Their chains are broken: they are restored to all those rights which the House of Austria had taken from them. If the Belgians, through any motive whatever, shall consent to deprive themselves of the navigation of the Scheldt, France will not oppose it. It will respect their independence, even in their errors. After so frank a declaration,” it was added, “which manifests such a sincere desire of peace, the ministers of his Britannic Majesty ought to entertain no doubt respecting the intentions of France. But if these explanations appear to them insufficient, and if we are still obliged to hear the language of haughtiness, and if hostile preparations are continued in the ports of England, we will prepare for war; we shall combat with regret the English, whom we esteem, but we shall combat them without fear.”

On this paper, Lord Grenville made the obvious remark, that the explanations it contained were nearly reduced to the same points to which he had already replied at length. The declaration of wishing to intermeddle with the affairs of other countries was renewed. No denial was made, nor reparation offered for the outrageous proceedings stated in the letter of December the thirty-first; and the right of infringing treaties, and violating the rights of our allies, was still maintained, by offering only an illusory negotiation,

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18th.
Answer of
Lord
Grenville.

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which, as well as the evacuation of the Low Countries by the French armies, was put off to the indefinite period, not only of the conclusion of war, but likewise of the consolidation of what was called the liberty of the Belgians. If the notification concerning war, or that relative to the treaty of commerce, had been made under a regular and official form, he afterward should have found himself under the necessity of replying to it, that to threaten Great Britain with a declaration of war because she judged it expedient to augment her forces, and also to declare that a solemn treaty should be broken because England adopted, for her own safety, such precautions as already existed in France, would only be considered, both by the one and the other, as new grounds of offence, which, as long as they should subsist, would prove a bar to every kind of negotiation. "Under this form of unofficial communication," his Lordship added, "I think I may yet be permitted to tell you, not in a tone of haughtiness, but firmness, that these explanations are not considered sufficient, and that all the motives which gave rise to the preparations still continue."

Letter of M.
Chauvelin.
17th.

Unpromising as were these circumstances, they were rendered still more so by a very petulant letter from M. Chauvelin, who solicited an interview, for the purpose, in the first place, of securing his communications with the French government, and that his couriers should be respected, and the secrecy of his letters observed. He wished also to be informed whether his new credentials would be received. He had learnt that day, he added, that the law relating to foreigners obliged them to make their declaration within ten days after the tenth of January; and, in case of neglect or refusal, the magistrates would be authorised to imprison them. He could not be implicated in this law; being the avowed and acknowledged organ of a government which executed laws to which twenty-five million of men had submitted themselves, his person was and ought to be sacred; but even if he had been so implicated, all the persecutions which it might please his Britannic Majesty to make him endure would fall

upon the French nation, in whose cause and for whose sake it would be his glory to suffer.

To the first part of this letter, it was answered, that his Majesty had reserved to himself the right of deciding the questions of acknowledging the present form of government in France, and of receiving a minister accredited by any authority, except that of the King, but that the present letters of credence would not be received. On the latter part, his Lordship said, "It only remains for me, especially after what has just past in France, to inform you that, as agent, charged with a confidential communication, you certainly might have expected the necessary measures on our part for the safety of your letters and of your messengers; that, as minister from the Most Christian King, you would have enjoyed all the exemptions which the law grants to recognized public ministers; but that, as a private person, you cannot but return to the general mass of foreigners resident in England."

On the murder of the French King, M. Chauvelin was informed that his functions, so long suspended, being now entirely terminated, he had no longer any public character here; and he was ordered to quit the kingdom in eight days, but assured that he should return to France with all the attentions that are due to the character of minister plenipotentiary from his Most Christian Majesty, which he had exercised in this country. Before this communication had been made, the French government had anticipated its effect, by an order recalling M. Chauvelin.

From the time that Brissot made his venomous report, the hope of maintaining peace with France was nearly extinct; but yet, government did not refuse attention to some simulated overtures of a conciliatory aspect. Lord Auckland, the British minister at the Hague, had laid before the Dutch government a statement of the correspondence in London, with advice and caution conformable to apparent contingencies. Dumouriez, whose plan of invading Holland had been prevented by unexpected circumstances, was desirous

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20th.
Answer.

24th.
Chauvelin is
dismissed.

23rd.
Recalled by
France.

Attempts at
negotiation.

Conference
proposed.

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of opening conferences tending to a pacific arrangement. The majority of the executive council, Clavière, Pache, and Monge, in reality, opposed this attempt; but, for the sake of appearance, feigned compliance, while they took measures which they knew must frustrate its success. Under pretence of attending to some private affairs of his own, M. De Maulde repaired to the Hague, while M. Maret returned to London. Dumouriez sent a letter to Lord Auckland, proposing a conference on the frontier, near Antwerp, where he was going to inspect the winter quarters of his army; and said it would be very agreeable to him, if an opportunity presented itself, to meet his Lordship on the frontier, trusting that their conference might be beneficial to mankind in general, as well as to the two nations. The English minister expressed great pleasure at the proposal, observing, to M. De Maulde, that as the interests of England and Holland were inseparable, he would deliberate with the grand pensionary, Van Spiegel. This was agreed to by the pensionary; packet boats were despatched to England; Dumouriez arrived; and it was decided that the conference should be holden at Moerdyk, on board a yacht of the Prince of Orange, to be fitted up for that purpose.

Feb. 2.

M. Maret goes
to London.

Jan. 26.

Feb 6.

No conference
takes place.Preparations
for war.

During this period, M. Maret, after some delays contrived by Le Brun, was sent to London, to enquire whether Mr. Pitt was really desirous of treating with Dumouriez, and, if so, to procure him a passport. At Dover, he met M. Chauvelin, and, in consequence of information from him, applied to the French minister for fresh instructions. He reached London; but, after remaining eight days, and receiving no communication from his government, he wrote to Lord Grenville to take leave, and returned to Paris. A similar fate attended the mission to the Hague, where the parties quitted without obtaining an interview*.

It is not easy to conceive for what purpose the French government sanctioned these pretended negotiations. While they were proceeding, if it may be

* Locrételle, tome ii. p. 172.

said they ever did proceed, the French government was eagerly preparing for a war, on which they were determined. The committee of general defence was framing a report to be presented to the Convention, as usual, by Brissot. It began by asserting that England was desirous of war. In January, a hope existed that reason would bring back the English to the principles of justice; but their hostile views were now undisguised; hitherto they had been covered by the perfidious mask of neutrality; but that had been rent away by the firmness of the republic. "George, secretly, and for a long time, meditated a war against your liberty; for what tyrant can ever pardon you that? But he feared his ministry, his Parliament, the commercial body, and the nation; he has corrupted the national opinion; he has terrified commerce; he has prescribed to the Parliament, he has menaced his ministers; and, confident in the coalition, he has now declared war against you. He had done so in ordering your ambassador to leave England in eight days; in publicly giving marks of his grief on the fate of that conspirator whom you justly condemned to death; in demanding of the Parliament, when he heard the intelligence, a considerable addition to the forces by land and sea." It was denied that the clubs had any influence over the government, and the crimes so much reprobated were imputed only to individuals, not at all affecting the nation. England, if not misled by the ministry, would have seen, in revolution, only the legitimate conquest of rights; in the republican government, one most certain to maintain liberty and equality; in the death of Louis, nothing but a great act of justice; and would have said to their King, "The French wished to be republicans; they have abolished royalty, and punished their king: they had a right to do so. The French do not fight against us because we have a King: why should we fight against them because they have none? We can still continue to be brothers, although under a different government. Doubtless, citizens," the report proceeded, "the ministers who have declared war against us will not end their days in the bosom

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Report of the
committee of
general de-
fence.
Feb.

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War declared
against En-
gland and
Holland.

January 28.
The King's
message to
Parliament.

“ of tranquillity, like that North and his accomplices,
“ who have been supposed to be sufficiently punished
“ by a ministerial disgrace for the atrocious crime of
“ the war with America. The English nation, once
“ enlightened by our example, will do justice on the
“ conspirators in place; the comedy of the eternal trial of
“ Hastings will not be renewed; and the scaffolds will
“ serve once more for the Straffords and Lauds of the
“ present government, as well as for common robbers:
“ well do they merit to be brought there, those who
“ have provoked this fratricidal war, those who seek to
“ overthrow, in the liberty of France, the liberty of
“ every people. Never was there a crime more horrible;
“ it is a crime against the whole human race*.” And
it was said that, in the war against England, France
would combat rather the government and its satellites
than the nation, sparing peaceable individuals, to strike
the guilty. To declare themselves at war with the
English government, was to declare the same with the
Stadtholder, who was rather the subject than the ally
of the cabinet of Saint James’s, and a decree was
carried by acclamation, without a single expression of
dissent, declaring war against the King of England,
and the Stadtholder of the United Provinces†.

To understand rightly some portions of the above
report, it is necessary to state, that, on the meeting of
Parliament after the recess, Mr. Dundas presented a
message from the King, accompanied with copies of
the correspondence between Lord Grenville and M.
Chauvelin. His Majesty thought it indispensably
necessary to make further augmentation of his forces
by sea and land, for maintaining the security and rights
of his own dominions, supporting his allies, and op-
posing views of aggrandizement and ambition on the
part of France, which would be at all times dangerous

* Brissot little thought, when he uttered these savage and atrocious sentiments, that in three “little months” he and all his adherents would, under the domination of clubs, which he denied to exist, be denounced, proscribed, hunted down, and sacrificed, by a ferocious party in his own country, precisely on the principles which he vainly prophesied would prevail in England.

† In relating these transactions, I have principally followed Herbert Marsh, afterward Lord Bishop of Peterborough, in his History of the Politics of Great Britain and France, with a careful revision of his authorities, particularly Miles’s Authentic Correspondence with M. Le Brun, and the original papers in the Parliamentary Journals and Debates, and in the *Moniteur*.

to the general interests of Europe; but, peculiarly so, when connected with the propagation of principles leading to the violation of the most sacred duties, and utterly subversive of the peace and order of civil society.

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This fact, and this alone, could be known in France at the time when she declared war; for it was not until the very day when Brissot's report was delivered in the Convention that the sentiments of the two Houses of Parliament were disclosed.

February 1.

In the House of Commons, the address was moved by Mr. Pitt; but to detail his long and luminous speech would only be to repeat facts recently stated, and observations already suggested. His exposure of clandestine designs, his detail of aggressions and spoliations, his demonstration that nothing contained in the papers afforded any answer to the past, or any security for the future, and his proofs that the conduct of France was inconsistent with the peace and liberty of Europe, were most clear, cogent, and satisfactory. Lord Beauchamp seconded the motion, declaring that the only fault we had committed was the state of neutrality which we had observed toward France since the commencement of her unhappy distractions: had we interfered sooner, and endeavoured to resist her career of madness, we might, very likely, have prevented many of her misfortunes.

Address in
the House of
Commons.

The Earl of Wycombe, Mr. Whitbread, Mr. Fox, and Lord William Russel, opposed the address, on the ground that nothing in the conduct of France justified, on our part, a declaration of war. The atrocious act lately committed would stand foremost in the black catalogue of crimes which history had to record; it would remain a foul stain on the national character of the people amongst whom it had been perpetrated; but that and other barbarities committed in France were to be attributed to the sanguinary manifestoes of the Duke of Brunswick. If France had broken faith with the Dutch, that was no reason why we should go to war; and the doctrine of the Convention respecting the navigation of the Scheldt was vindicated. The

Opposed.

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decree of the 19th of November was an insult, and the explanation of the Executive Council no adequate satisfaction ; but the explanation showed that the French were not disposed to insist upon that decree, and that they were inclined to peace ; and their own ministers, with haughtiness unexampled, told them they had insulted us, but refused to tell them the nature of the satisfaction that we required. If the invasion of the Netherlands now alarmed us,—and that it ought to alarm us, if the result was to make the country an appendage to France, there could be no doubt,—we ought to have interposed to prevent it in the very first instance ; for it was the natural consequence, which every man foresaw, of a war between France and Austria. After five or six years' war, the French might agree to evacuate the Netherlands as the price of peace. Was it clear that they would not do so now, if we would condescend to propose it in intelligible terms ? But, then, we had no security against French principles ! What security would they be able to give us after a war, which they could not give now ? To the general situation and security of Europe we had been so scandalously inattentive ; we had seen the entire conquest of Poland, and the invasion of France, with such marked indifference, that it would be difficult now to take it up with the grace of sincerity ; but even this would be better provided for, by proposing terms before going to war. The justifiable grounds for war were insult, injury, or danger. For the first, satisfaction ; for the second, reparation ; for the third, security was the object. Each of these was matter of negotiation, which ought ever to precede war, except in case of an attack actually commenced.

Supported.

Mr. Anstruther and Mr. Windham spoke in favour of the address ; but the debate must necessarily want interest, when it is considered that at the very moment when our senators were considering whether or not it would be proper for us to declare war against France, the French senate, without a debate, decreed a declaration of war against us. No amendment was moved, and the address was voted.

Carried.

In the upper House, Lord Grenville moved the address; Earl Stanhope proposed an amendment; it was little supported; no decision was resorted to; but a protest in twelve articles, signed by two peers, and, as to three articles and a half, by one, and another protest signed by Earl Stanhope alone, were placed on the journals.

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In the Lords.
Protests.

Such were the circumstances under which Great Britain was forced into hostilities with France. On a fair review of them, it must be evident that she had done nothing to incite, but had, by a great display of forbearance and patience, endeavoured to avoid them. If the unprovoked aggressions, the insulting declarations, the encouragement afforded to all who professed hostility to our government, are considered, the intention of France at a convenient moment to engage in a war cannot be doubted; and when to these circumstances are added the avowed contempt of the obligations of treaties, the unjustifiable invasion of the territories of our pacific ally, in the declared hope that in both countries the people would assist in overthrowing the government, the impracticability of maintaining peace becomes additionally evident. On the part of England, many acts of generosity, kindness, and forbearance may be cited; and, in the enumeration of grievances, the French themselves could not produce one which would justify, or even palliate, their declaration of war. That we thought it necessary to have the power of protecting ourselves against men, who, without the pretext of ordinary engagements, might find it convenient, just as they might be driven by the tempests of the revolution, or allured by the hope of mischief or of prey, to place themselves among us, could afford no ground of complaint; that we should protect our commerce and our subsistence by preventing the debased paper currency of a foreign nation from being employed to distress our merchants, or given in exchange for the first necessary of life, or, considering the use that had been made of the fear of famine during their revolution, that we should take the means which prudence suggested to prevent the

Observations.

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extension of the same evil to ourselves, were not the true grounds and foundations of the enmity of France. Her rulers were undoubtedly offended at the sympathy expressed by all men of just and honourable feeling at the injuries and indignities inflicted on the Royal Family ; but these were not so expressed, nor was any measure taken in consequence, upon which a declaration of war could be justly founded. Neither our ministers nor our Parliament had given public audience to emissaries who declared an intention to overthrow their existing government ; we had admitted no such persons into our legislative or administrative bodies ; we had professed no participation in their wrongs, no inclination, under any circumstances, to afford them direct or indirect assistance ; the most we had done was to grant security and asylum to those whom their countrymen hunted from their homes like noxious reptiles, and save from absolute famine those who were unaided by fortune, and who, from their education and previous habits, could not gain their bread by their daily labour. But, in shewing compassion to these unhappy individuals, we gave them no political importance or accredited character. They did not come to the bar of our legislature to present addresses reflecting on the government of their own country ; nor was any public notice taken of their sentiments, their grievances, or even of their existence.

In fact, the false and deceptive notion that a numerous and powerful, not a noisy and insignificant, party wished for their aid, at first misled the French. Their hatred to England, to her religious and civil establishments, their envy of her unobtrusive and unostentatious liberty, gave a strong impulse to their sentiments, while their hope of gain from the plunder of the most ample accumulation of wealth in the world, animated their hopes and afforded ground for the expression in Brissot's report, that to avoid a war with England was more consistent with their wishes than with their interest. The objects of French ambition had never been varied. Mirabeau had described them in a pithy sentence : " The Rhine for a boundary, and

“irresistible influence over all the governments of Europe*!” This, according to him, was to be the result of a good constitution, and, under their present system, the French sought to effect it by dividing the people from their governments, and placing them in a state of hostility, by representing all dominion as oppression, revenue as robbery, and loyalty as the demonstration of baseness. Toward England, in particular, they shewed an unmitigated hatred, and envy of her domestic and foreign happiness, particularly her power in India. On this feeling were founded the malignant mention of our Asiatic possessions, so common in their debates, reports, and state-papers, and the often repeated distinctions between the government and the people. Their declared intention to complete the revolution of the money system, and ruin the Bank of England, by planting assignats in the counting houses of Holland†, sufficiently accounts for the rage which was expressed when the English government, foreseeing the effect, prohibited the circulation of that deceptive paper.

To England, a war could not, in any possible view, be desirable; whatever might be its events, whatever its result, her position could not be improved by it. Of foreign possessions she had no need; her colonies required care, rather than augmentation; her commerce was ample, secure from all chances of competition, and certainly not to be benefited by war; and the system of economy so strenuously pursued during the administration of Mr. Pitt must be deranged, perhaps irreparably, by the inevitable increase of the national debt. If England entered into the war, it must be as a leading party, not as an adjunct or mere assistant to the powers already engaged; and certainly there never was a time when the cause of allies presented a less hopeful aspect. The disgraceful events of the invasion, the calamities of the subsequent campaign, the divisions of interest which must necessa-

* Lettre à Mauvillon du 31 Jan. 1790, p. 506 du Recueil.—Biographical Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 120.

† Ante, p. 331.

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rily influence their councils, the odium resulting from the partition of Poland, the feebleness of Spain, the hesitation of Russia, and all the intrigues, jealousies, and uncertainties which surrounded Switzerland, the Italian, and many other states, formed a picture which did not invite a rich, free, and independent nation willingly to engage in war. But to Great Britain a choice was denied; to preserve her honour, her duties, and her security, she was obliged to engage; and it was speedily seen that the zeal, courage, and generosity of the people were not appealed to in vain, when required to support the just views and honourable intentions of their King, and the claims of their country.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTY-FIRST.

1793.

Lord Loughborough Chancellor.—'The King's message on the war.—Mr. Pitt moves an address in the House of Commons—seconded by Mr. Powys.—Mr. Fox moves an amendment.—Address carried.—House of Lords.—The Duke of Portland.—Earl Stanhope moves an amendment—the Earl of Lauderdale moves another.—Amendments rejected.—Mr. Fox moves resolutions—motion negatived.—Mr. Grey's motion—negatived.—View of transactions in other countries.—Effects of the murder of the French King.—Declaration of Monsieur.—Russia—Spain—Rome.—Murder of Basseville.—Resentment of the Convention.—Naples.—Strength of the allied Powers.—State of France.—Conduct of the French government.—Their armies.—Army of the North.—Successes of the allies.—Plunder in Flanders.—Alarms of the Convention.—The country proclaimed in danger.—Dumouriez defeated at Tirlemont—and Louvain.—The French expelled from Flanders.—State of Paris.—Desertion of Dumouriez.

At this period, the great seal, which had been in commission since the resignation of Lord Thurlow, was given to Lord Loughborough; Sir James Eyre, from Chief Baron of the Exchequer, became Chief Justice of the Common Pleas; the place he vacated was filled by Sir Archibald Macdonald; Sir John Scott was appointed Attorney-general, and Sir John Mitford Solicitor-general.

A message from His Majesty announced to both Houses the hostile acts of France, and her declaration

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Lord
Loughborough
Chancellor.
January 28.

Feb. 11.
King's mes-
sage on the
war.

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of war against this country and Holland, and required aid “ in prosecuting a just and necessary war, and in “ endeavouring, under the blessing of Providence, to “ oppose an effectual barrier to the further progress of “ a system which struck at the security and peace of “ all independent nations, and was pursued in open “ defiance of every principle of moderation, good faith, “ humanity, and justice.” It also expressed His Majesty’s reliance on the cordial co-operation of his allies.

12th.

Mr. Pitt
moves an
address in the
House of
Commons.

In moving for an address, Mr. Pitt expressed a hope that it would be voted unanimously. He recapitulated the circumstances which had rendered the late message for an increase of forces necessary, and the subsequent proceedings of the French government. He exposed the fallacy of their renouncing aggrandizement, disclaiming the right of interference with the government of others, while their practice demonstrated a system precisely opposite, as was avowed by their decree of the 19th of November, expressly inciting the people of every nation to rise and reject their legitimate governments, and encouraging them by promises of fraternity and alliance. Its application to this as well as other countries was shewn by its tenor, by the speeches, in the Convention, of those who supported it, and by the exultation of those societies which were formed for the avowed purpose of subverting our constitution. These provocations would, in former times, have occasioned an instant declaration of war; but ministers had prudently and temperately essayed all measures for obtaining satisfaction, making communications to the agents of France, although not accredited, of our grounds of jealousy and complaint, and affording opportunity of tendering explanation or satisfaction. Peace was desirable only so far as it was secure; nor would the House, he trusted, submit to a precarious and disgraceful peace, instead of a timely and vigorous effort in arms. In fact, it was needless to debate the expediency of war; war was declared; we were actually engaged in a war, and government might be deemed too slow in asserting the honour and

vindicating the rights of this country, rather than accused of precipitancy.

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Adverting then to the causes of hostility alleged by the French, he observed that our armament did not take place until the period when the French had shewn their intention to disregard all treaties, propagated principles of universal war, and discovered views of unbounded conquest. The disseminators of such principles might now rather despair of their general reception and adoption: how little progress they had made in this country was evinced by the spirit which had displayed itself, and the declarations from every quarter of a firm determination to support the constitution. He treated with mixed severity and contempt the complaint that we mourned for the death of the murdered King. "Thus," he said, "would they even destroy those principles of justice and compassion, which led us to reprobate their crimes, and to be afflicted at their cruelties; thus would they deprive us of that last resource of humanity—to mourn over the misfortunes and sufferings of the victims of injustice."

The specific fact, alleged as a ground of their declaration of war, the accession of His Majesty to the treaty between Austria and Prussia, was entirely false and unfounded; the augmentation of our armament was a measure of indispensable precaution: all the other complaints were unjust, unfounded, absurd, frivolous pretexts, obviously created to justify a measure of which the French government were strongly desirous, and shewed that, instead of waiting for provocation, they only sought a pretence of aggression.

Mr. Powys, while he acknowledged that he had been accustomed to view the ministry with jealousy and distrust, laid those feelings aside, and seconded the motion. He could consider France only as a monster, whose hand was against every man, and therefore every man's hand should be against her. It would be humiliating to negotiate with such a gang of unprincipled desperadoes.

Seconded by
Mr. Powys.

Mr. Fox, opposing the address, said he would not

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Mr. Fox moves
an amendment.

abandon his duty, although his opinions might be misunderstood or misrepresented, or although he might meet the imprecation with which he was menaced, as an abettor of France. If the principle advanced by the seconder of the motion was correct, war must be *bellum internecinum*, a war of extermination; but if, as the mover had stated, we were at war on account of a specific aggression, atonement might be made, and peace concluded. Had ministers moved an address simply pledging the cordial co-operation of the House in prosecuting a just and necessary war, for the purpose of a safe and honourable peace; to such an address he should have agreed; but they were now called on to vote, that ministers had given no cause or provocation for the war; to say, that they would enter into no investigation of its origin; to give them an indemnity for the past, and a promise of support for the future.

The causes of the war were not different from those which had existed in the times of Louis the Fourteenth or Louis the Sixteenth. They were not insults or aggressions, but a refusal of satisfaction when specifically demanded. He admitted that the decree of November required explanation; but no clear and specific demand of explanation had been shown. So, on the opening of the Scheldt, and the conquest of Brabant, we complained, but proposed nothing that would be admitted as satisfaction, or remove our alarm. Lord Grenville's proposal, that France should withdraw her troops from the Netherlands, and our complaints on the conquest of Savoy, were insults which entitled the French to demand satisfaction of us. To have suffered Earl Gower's continuance at Paris after the tenth of August would not have implied a recognition of the new government, any more than to have negotiated in a safe and direct way, in preference to one that was indirect and hazardous.

He agreed that the complaint of our preventing the circulation of assignats was absurd, nor was the alien act a just cause of war, although a violation, both in letter and spirit, of the commercial treaty. The opening of the Scheldt and the alarming operations in

Belgium, he was not disposed to defend; but he saw no purpose in alluding to them, unless to inflame the passions and mislead the judgment; the French complained, too, of our conduct on the afflicting news of the murder of their King; of that event he should never speak but with grief and detestation. But was the expression of our sorrow all? Was not the atrocious event made the subject of a message from his Majesty to both houses of Parliament? But if, as some thought, this event alone was a sufficient cause of war, what end could be gained by further negotiation with Chauvelin, Maret, or Dumouriez? Did ministers mean to barter the blood of this ill-fated monarch for any of the points in dispute? In these unofficial attempts, they seemed afraid of asking satisfaction, lest it should be granted; of stating the specific causes of war, lest they should lose the pretext. It was neither his practice nor his inclination to speak harshly of kings. He acknowledged, in proper terms, the patriotism, virtue, and justice of our own King; but yet he feared that this would be supposed a war for restoring monarchy in France, and for supporting rather the cause of kings, than the cause of the people. We had been compelled to conclude the American war on terms less advantageous than could have been obtained without unsheathing the sword; and the consequences of this contest might be similar to us, while, to our ally, the Dutch, they must be such as he would not suffer himself to anticipate. Considering that we had ordered M. Chauvelin to depart, and prohibited the exportation of corn to France, when it was allowed to other countries, he could not agree in asserting that the war was an unprovoked aggression, and he moved an amendment, promising firm and effectual support in repelling hostile attempts, and in the necessary exertions for inducing France to accede to terms of pacification affording security to his Majesty and his allies.

Mr. Burke, after declaring that ministers had clearly, satisfactorily, and completely justified their conduct, made a vehement attack on the speech and

Mr. Burke.

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conduct of Mr. Fox, and concluded a strain of eloquent personality, by observing that, although a great admirer of his speeches, he estimated that which he had just heard less highly than others, for he had read every part of it in harangues of Brissot in the National Convention.

That a country, at the moment of entering into a war, should define its objects, or the means of prosecuting it, or pretend to limit its duration, was contrary to the practice of all nations. War had been declared by the French; but they had not declared that they did not intend the ruin, the destruction, and total subversion of this country and all its establishments. They put no limits to their views; while gentlemen would have Britain cramped and tied by a premature declaration of her objects. In her present acts of aggrandizement and declared hostility against monarchy, aristocracy, and governments in general, but more particularly that of this country, France was more dangerous, and more to be guarded against, than at any former period. A war with France under present circumstances must be terrible, but peace much more so. A nation that had abandoned all its valuable distinctions, arts, sciences, religion, law, order, every thing but the sword, was most formidable and dreadful to all nations composed of citizens who only used soldiers as a defence. The ancient government, however inferior to ours, would be felicity and comfort, compared to the present state of tyranny in France. By their own papers, it appeared that, in Lyons alone, thirty thousand manufacturers were perishing for want. Thus their enormities had produced misery—their misery would drive them to despair—and out of that despair they would look for a remedy in the destruction of all other countries, and particularly of Great Britain.

Mr. Sheridan.

Mr. Sheridan made severe observations on the manner in which Mr. Fox had been attacked, and asserted that, in many of his arguments, Mr. Burke had misrepresented or misapplied the opinions he had

affected to refute ; the speech was a powerful vindication of Mr. Fox, but bore very slightly on the general objects of discussion.

The amendment was negatived, and the address was agreed to without a division.

In the upper House, Lord Grenville, like Mr. Pitt, recapitulated the transactions with M. Chauvelin, and all that had occurred since the recall of Lord Gower, analyzed the complaints of the French government, and exposed their presumption, injustice, and futility. It was his wish not to have adverted to the dreadful murder of the King, because he meant to appeal solely to the understanding and not to the feelings of the House. In all Europe it had occasioned horror ; and at such a moment to have received M. Chauvelin as a minister, from a body so branded with infamy as the National Convention, would have been an instance of disgraceful pusillanimity. After the massacre of St. Bartholomew, the French ambassador, admitted to an audience of Queen Elizabeth, found the apartments leading to the presence chamber all hung with black, the courtiers and the Queen in deep mourning, and, in the coldness and gloom of his reception, saw how much the dreadful act was execrated. Had M. Chauvelin been admitted to an audience, he must have seen the same display of mourning ; in passing through the streets, he would have found almost every one wearing the garb of sorrow, execrating the dreadful deed, and no one could tell to what excesses indignation might have prompted the people. It had been said that this tragic event might have been prevented by bribery and corruption ; but the cause of the murder lay too deep for avarice to reach ; it was the effect of foul ambition, the more horrible, as it was the more unnatural.

Lord Grenville also adverted to the intended address to the people of England, prepared by Condorcet, Barrère, the President of the Convention during the King's trial, and Paine ; on each of whom he made appropriate observations, adding that the Convention shewed themselves but little acquainted with the disposition of the people of England, whom nothing could bind more

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Address carried.

House of
Lords.

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The Duke of
Portland.

Earl Stanhope
moves an
amendment.

The Earl of
Lauderdale
moves another.

closely to their King and Parliament than an attempt by France to separate and disunite them.

In a short but firm speech, the Duke of Portland seconded the motion, pledging himself to support the war; but not so as to be prevented from inquiring scrupulously into the manner in which it should be conducted.

Earl Stanhope moved an amendment, casting all the blame of the war on the English government. He knew he should be unpopular during the present frenzy; but, as an honest man, he could not agree to sanction a war where we were the direct and sole aggressors. The most extraordinary part of this most extraordinary speech related to finance. The French, he said, had declared what all the world felt to be true, that the crown and church lands were the property of the nation; they were mere salary, which the nation might withdraw from any person or body with which they chose to dispense. They also, like America in the case of the loyalists, and England in 1715 and 1745, had confiscated the estates of the emigrants. Thus they acquired possession of property amounting to £192,000,000 sterling. By a statement presented to the Convention, it appeared, that after all the expenses of 1793, they would still have in their hands, ready to be converted into the actual sinews of war, property amounting to £152,000,000; finances such as neither this nor all the countries of Europe united could equal.

This speech and amendment appear to have proceeded entirely from Lord Stanhope; for the Earl of Lauderdale moved another, perfectly according in sense and differing but little in terms from that proposed in the other House. He asserted that the most wicked arts had been practised to irritate and mislead the multitude. Hand-bills, wretched songs, infamous pamphlets, false and defamatory paragraphs in newspapers, and even a report that the New River water had been poisoned with arsenic by French emissaries, were profusely circulated; but the jugglers were suspected, and the public would soon unveil their impostures. In terms similar to those used by Mr. Fox, he

contrasted the conduct of ministers with that which had been pursued in the disputes concerning the Falkland's Islands and Nootka Sound. Instead of obtaining by negotiation a happy reconciliation, they had provoked a war, most wanton, fruitless, and dangerous, to which no end could be affixed, when we ought to have renewed our commercial treaty, and settled the peace of Europe on a basis that could not have been shaken for ages.

The Marquis of Lansdowne also opposed the address, recapitulating and sustaining many of the complaints made by France to shew that we were the aggressors. He made a forcible appeal on the state of the country, on the discontents of Ireland, and the indisposition of Scotland. What would be the consequence when the real public of England also should be aroused, and the false public, the associations, laid asleep? The war, he said, was not one of anger, nor of vengeance, but of aggrandizement; and he foretold, as a certain result of our treaties, a demand of subsidies.

These arguments were combated by Lord Stormont, Lord Hawkesbury, and the Duke of Leeds; both amendments were negatived, the original address carried, and no division or protest appears on the journals.

In a few days, Mr. Fox again called the attention of the House to the subject of these debates, by moving a series of resolutions, in which he embodied the principal arguments he had previously detailed. They imported:—first, that it was not for the honour or interest of Great Britain to make war upon France on account of her internal circumstances, or for the suppression of opinions or principles, however pernicious; or of establishing any particular form of government: secondly, that the complaints which had been stated did not justify a war without an attempt to gain redress by negotiation: third, that in the late negotiation ministers had not taken measures to procure redress without a rupture, or stated distinctly any terms and conditions on which his Majesty would persevere in a system of neutrality: fourth, that the security of Europe and the rights of nations had not

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Marquis of
Lansdowne.

Amendments
rejected.

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Mr. Fox
moves
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been attended to by ministers in the case of Poland : and fifth, that it was the duty of ministers to advise his Majesty against entering into engagements which might prevent him from making a separate peace, or countenance an opinion that he was acting in concert with other powers for the unjustifiable purpose of compelling the people of France to submit to a form of government which they did not approve.

Little novelty was contained in the mover's speech ; the principal point was a vigorous attack on the late partition of Poland. He recapitulated the facts attending the revolution in May 1791, the sanction of Prussia, the invasion by the Empress of Russia in 1792, without any pretext but a change in the internal government ; and detailed the ineffectual applications made to the King of Prussia for his stipulated succours. It was singular that ministers should be so keen to mark and stigmatise all the inconsistencies of the French with their former declarations, which had been too great and too many, and yet could see without question the inconsistency, not to say perfidy, displayed in this conduct. When the King of Prussia approved of their revolution, their principles were unexceptionable ; when they were attempting a brave but unsuccessful resistance to a more powerful adversary, their principles were not dangerous ; but when they were overpowered by superior force, when they laid down their arms, and submitted to their conqueror, when their whole country was possessed by a foreign army, then he discovered that they had French principles among them, subversive of all government, and destructive of all society. And how did he cure them of their abominable principles ? Oh ! by an admirable remedy ! invading their country, and taking possession of their towns. Are they tainted with Jacobinism ? Hew down the gates of Thorn, and march in the Prussian troops. Do they deny that they entertain such principles ? Seize upon Dantzick and annex it to the dominions of Prussia. Now, was not this a greater and more contemptuous violation of the law of nations than the French had yet been guilty of ?

Most undoubtedly it was. The King of Prussia first connives at, or consents to, the invasion of Poland; next, he attempts an unprovoked invasion of France, and is foiled. How does he revenge the disgrace of his repulse? By increasing his army on the Rhine, by concentrating his forces for a fresh attack? No: he more gallantly turns round on defenceless Poland, and indemnifies himself for his losses by seizing on towns where he can meet with no resistance. He lamented that England could be supposed to be involved in that detested league.

Mr. Burke opposed the first resolution, in a speech fraught with his usual wisdom and discernment, but highly tinctured with his characteristic vehemence and eccentricity. He repeated his observation, that Mr. Fox copied, or, in a most surprising manner, coincided with Brissot. There had not been an argument used, or a proposition made, that night, that had not been announced in the French papers as sure to be offered. It was quite new for a gentleman, while endeavouring to procure an address, deprecating one war as unjust, to offer grounds for entering on a fresh one, on behalf of a place in a remote part of the world. He did not vindicate the King of Prussia or the Empress of Russia in seizing the territory and overturning the government of Poland; yet those were not such near or pressing concerns as that of France getting possession of the countries she had, and daily augmenting her power. England had seen the constitution of Poland overturned, her King deposed, and her territory divided before; but Mr. Fox never suggested an interference until the moment when the hostile and dangerous proceedings in France called for the whole force and energy of the country to be directed against her.

Mr. Burke.

The tendency of the resolutions was to declare that Great Britain was, in all the late transactions, wrong, and France in every act right and just. If England should not interfere with the internal government of France, reciprocity should be looked for; France should not interfere in that of England. Was this the case? No! beside other instances, Danton had recently de-

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clared, in the Convention, that they had thrown down a king's head as a gauntlet to the kings of Europe ; and that the scaffold erected in Westminster Hall for the interminable trial of Mr. Hastings, would serve for the ministers, and even—(he felt an almost insuperable objection to express it) even for George himself. The rulers of France were a gang of robbers, with whom we could not treat. As a proof, he spoke in terms of contemptuous severity, not necessary now to be repeated, of the lives, origin, and conduct of Roland, Le Brun, Condorcet, and Brissot, of Citizen Egalité, alias Orléans, and Dumouriez could not answer even for the obedience of his army. The only man among them of any degree of honour was the hangman ; he, poor fellow, had the spirit to refuse to execute the King, though he was at no loss for deputies*.

With much flippancy, Mr. Fox had talked of the law of nations. On what law could the French be expected to treat? by a new law of nations of their own, they had pronounced all treaties with kings—or as they called them, despots—void. Gentlemen, who were so charmed with the lights of this new philosophy, might say that age had rendered his eyes too dim to perceive the glorious blaze. But, old though he was, he saw well enough to distinguish that it was not the light of heaven, but the light of rotten wood and stinking fish—the gloomy sparkling of collected filth, corruption, and putrefaction.

So have I seen, in larder dark,
Of veal a lucid loin,
Replete with many a brilliant spark
(As sage philosophers remark),
At once both stink and shine.

Other
Speakers.

No member of administration took any share in the debate; beside Mr. Burke, Mr. Fox was opposed by Mr. Jenkinson, Mr. Powys, Sir Richard Hill, Sir Francis Basset, and Mr. Windham, and supported by

* It was not a little remarkable that these violent expressions, and many others which are omitted, formed a portion of an argument in which the orator had censured Mr. Fox for disgraceful mention of the King of Prussia, and had observed that sans-culotte language seemed to have become the bon ton.

Mr. Grey, Mr. Adam, Mr. Jekyll, Major Maitland, Mr. Lambton, Mr. Sheridan, and Mr. W. Smith.

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Mr. Fox, in reply, vindicated himself from many of the reflections of Mr. Burke, but spoke with an evident knowledge that his efforts were unavailing. He had been told that the part he had taken was not popular; but, however desirous of popularity, he could not prefer it to the interests of the country. It was not his duty to be influenced by that consideration. It gave him satisfaction, that, even amidst the general exultation which prevailed with respect to a war, no one offered a direct negative to his motion, but that it was to be got rid of by the previous question. He did not wish, but feared, that this exultation would have a termination similar to that so emphatically described by Tacitus, "*Spe læta, tractatu dura, eventu tristia.*"

1793.
Mr. Fox

On a division, the previous question was negatived by a majority exceeding six to one*.

Motion
negatived.

Mr. Grey fruitlessly endeavoured to rekindle the ashes of these debates, by moving, in a short speech, a long address. He was anxious, he said, to make an explicit declaration and avowal of his sentiments, and to court the distinction of being recorded as one who had, with every possible exertion, opposed the impolitic measures which had plunged us into a war likely to be so calamitous and ruinous.

21st.
Mr. Grey's
motion.

After Mr. Pitt had said a very few words, Mr. Drake observed that this voluminous, elaborate, circuitous address, brought forward in the way of a protest, was best answered by his decided No. To the proceedings of gentlemen on the other side of the House, he had no doubt the people were nearly unanimous in uttering their No; while to the measures of ministers they joined in emphatically pronouncing their Aye.

Mr. Drake.

Without further debate, the motion was negatived.

Motion
negatived.

At this period, in order to facilitate the understanding of the subsequent proceedings, the narrative of

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View of
transactions
in other
countries.Effect of the
murder of the
French King.

parliamentary debates is suspended, and some further account given of transactions in other countries, by which British interests were materially affected.

Not in Europe, or in monarchical states alone, but even in republican America,—not among the noble, the learned, and the wealthy only, but even in the most humble and undistinguished classes of society, was the death of Louis reprobated as a stigma on the human character, and an indelible stain on his murderers; it was also a subject of personal grief and individual sorrow. Such being the temper of men's minds, governments naturally adopted a corresponding decision*.

Jan. 28.

Declaration of
Monsieur.

When apprized of the horrible catastrophe, Monsieur issued, at Hamm, in Westphalia, a declaration, in which, assuming the title of Regent of France, he acknowledged his nephew, Louis the Seventeenth, as King, and named his brother, the Count d'Artois, lieutenant-general of the kingdom†.

Jan. 31.

Russia.

Soon after the Convention had decreed war against Great Britain and Holland, the Empress of Russia issued a similar declaration against France, and acknowledged Monsieur as Regent, according to his proclamation. From the extensive dominion and vast power of this sovereign, considerable expectations might be formed; and had her real weight been placed in the scale, it might have operated efficiently against the new republic; but her political affections were set entirely upon the spoil of Turkey and of Poland; and with these objects in view, although her declarations had been vehement, and her protection and succours to the emigrants cordial and liberal, no effectual co-operation in any extensive plan could be expected: the name of Russia, however, was a formidable addition to the list of the opponents of France.

Spain.

Spain, which from the affinity of its royal family to the unfortunate sovereign of France, might have been expected to stand forward vigorously in preventing his murder, or at least to make strenuous declarations or

* *Homme d'Etat*, tome ii. p. 161, et seq.; *Lacrételle*, tome x. p. 261.

† *Rivington's Annual Register*, vol. xxxv. pp. 301*, 302*; *Revue Chronologique*, p. 193.

alluring proposals in his behalf, was backward and indecisive, and, at most, if the facts are correctly stated, interposed only by a clumsy and ill-concerted intrigue*. But when the widely resounded cry of civilized nations pronounced the disgrace and danger of maintaining alliance, or even neutrality, with the regicide republicans, his Catholic Majesty issued also his declaration of war, assigning reasons not very grave or important; and his general, Ricardos, in a proclamation from the head of his army, declared it to be the intention of the King his master to relieve France from the horrid despotism by which it was oppressed, and to offer his firm protection and support to all good Frenchmen who would declare themselves the friends of their monarch†.

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March 23.

On the side of Italy, where their encroachments and annexations shewed that the republicans looked for easy and ample prey, they shewed every disposition to create hostility, by acts of insult and violence. The Pope, feeble in military power, no longer dreaded for his ecclesiastical authority, and the head of a religion which the French had renounced, was in all respects an object to be assailed with their utmost malignity. A sort of democratical society had been formed in Rome, consisting of about thirty artists, to discuss political questions, and was of course favoured by the French. Basseville, Chargé d'affaires of the Republic, excited a quarrel by taking down from the front of his official dwelling the royal arms of France, and substituting the bearings of the new government. The populace rose, pursued Basseville from his dwelling, assailed his carriage with missiles, and finally murdered him in the house of a banker, where he had taken refuge. Two other Frenchmen were victims to their rage, and the house where Basseville had made the offensive display was set on fire and reduced to a mere ruin.

Rome.

Murder of
Basseville.

January 13.

Although the Pope deeply deplored this violation of the law of nations, and had apprized Basseville of

Resentment of
the Conven-
tion.

* Lacrételle, tome x. p. 271.

† Rivington's Annual Register, vol. xxxv. p. 322*.

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the peril of his proceeding, and his own inability to protect him, the Convention viewed this as an inexecutable offence, and commanded the provisional executive council to take speedy and signal vengeance; they persisted, in defiance of all explanations, in considering the Pope as the author and promoter of the outrage, which they themselves had excited and courted. In the vehemence of their rage, some portion of the Convention talked of burning the Vatican. French blood, it was said, demanded revenge, and the welfare of mankind required the annihilation of the political monster which for centuries had saturated itself with human gore: its strength had been derived from the weakness of mankind; but light appeared, and it must perish*.

Naples.

Allied by near consanguinity to the unhappy Marie Antoinette, the King and Queen of Naples resented the wrongs she sustained, and declared war against her oppressors, adding to the number rather than the weight of their enemies; but yet affording support to the Sovereign Pontiff, and tendering an important resource to the fleets of Great Britain in the Mediterranean†. This event occasioned neither surprise nor concern in France. Strong in the acquisition of Nice, Monaco, and other territories which had been united to the republic, assured by the acknowledgment of their government by the State of Venice, and confident in the probability of spreading their principles and opinions among the people of Italy, they viewed all events in that country which furnished means of opposition as favourable to their ultimate success.

January 31.

February 27.

Strength of the
allied powers.

At this time, the union of powers against France comprised more potentates, with a greater population and more ample physical and political force, than had ever before been combined. The German Empire, Austria, Russia, Prussia, Great Britain, Spain, Portugal, Naples, the Ecclesiastical States, and Sardinia, formed the lists of her opponents. In Europe, she had no ally; the acknowledgment of her form of government

State of
France.

* Lacrételle, tome x. p. 273. — Mémoires Politiques, tome i. p. 194. — Moniteur, January 4, 13, 21, and 23rd February, 1793.

† Lacrételle, tome x. p. 273.

was generally withheld, and, where granted, considered as an expression of fear or a dereliction of the common cause of society. The state of the republic exhibited no cheering indications; deadly, vindictive, and blood-thirsty factions occupied the seats of the legislature; the people, freed from the control of religion, and unprotected by the operation of fixed and impartial jurisprudence, were swayed by all the influences of bad principle and wicked passion, and impelled by agitators of the most abandoned description; their finances presented a frightful spectacle; public credit annihilated; their assignats not received at half their nominal value, and circulated only by force and terror. To add to their calamities, an insurrection of formidable extent and description, founded on the principles of religion and loyalty, broke out in the portion of France called La Vendée; and, while it threatened by its own strength the stability of the government to which it was opposed, weakened very materially the resources for resisting the external enemy.

Thus assailed and menaced, the French government shewed no symptoms of doubt or apprehension. Their language was always firm, threatening, and boastful. Their measures, if they might be deemed always tyrannical, sometimes insane, sometimes frivolous, were never marked by fear; and whatever views might affect the factions in the Convention, no desertion of the public cause, no doubt of its justice or of ultimate success, no apology for the enemy or wish to appear in a prostrate or humiliated position before him, ever marked the conduct or speeches of any party or any individual. Without opposition from any, decrees were obtained for declaring all treaties of alliance or commerce which had been formed between the ancient government and any of the powers with whom they were now at war, null and void; for the levy of three hundred thousand men, with many severe regulations, compelling householders to disclose the names and quality of their inmates, for melting down church bells to be made into cannon, and for raising a very large nominal sum of money by issuing new assignats,

Conduct of
the French
government.

24th.

25th.

April 9.

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March 1.
Their armies.Army of the
North.Feb. 23rd and
24th.

March 2.

March 1.
Successes of
the allies.

to the amount of twelve hundred millions of livres (£50,000,000,) while those already in circulation were three milliards and one hundred millions (about £130,000,000).

To face her numerous and powerful foes, France had established eight armies. That of the north was headed by Dumouriez; those of the Ardennes, the Moselle, and the Lower Rhine, respectively, by Valence, Bournonville, and Custine*. To the operations of these troops it is necessary now to advert.

Before his pretended negotiations for peace with Great Britain and the safety of Holland had been finally broken off, Dumouriez boasted that he would speedily achieve the conquest of the united provinces, and dictate peace to England from the Tower of London. Having transmitted orders to Miranda for the regulation of his proceedings, he assembled the main army, consisting of sixty thousand men, in the neighbourhood of Antwerp; and, having published an address to the Batavians, full of scurrilous reflections on the Stadtholder and the government of England†, he proceeded to capture Breda and Klundert, while Berneron took Williamstadt, and d'Arçon Gertruydenberg. Meanwhile, Miranda, at the head of fifteen thousand men, was besieging Maestricht, and entertained hopes of its surrender; when General Clerfaye, crossing the Roer, above Aix-la-Chapelle, compelled the enemy to evacuate that city, and, falling on the besiegers at Maestricht, put them to the rout with great slaughter, relieved the place, and made the French fall back to Alderhoven. General Valence, in consternation, loudly called on Dumouriez for assistance; but that chief was now obliged to think only of retaining his rapid acquisitions in Austrian Flanders. He joined his forces to the discomfited army, and made a vain endeavour to check the victorious progress of the allies, who successively recaptured Tongres, Liege, Ruremonde, and Fort St. Michel, marking their progress by trophies gained in

* See Jared Sparks's *Life of Gouverneur Morris*, vol. ii. p. 303.

† See this proclamation and the answer in *Debrett's State Papers*.

the field of battle. The French general had no resource against these disasters but a querulous proclamation, ascribing the reverses he had sustained to the neglected and undisciplined state of the army; and endeavouring to reanimate the sinking courage of his troops, by recalling to memory the successful campaign of the last year.

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March 8th.

Intelligence of these reverses roused the Convention from their dream of easy conquest and profitable fraternization. Their schemes had been attended with such effect, that besides realising great sums in Flanders by the plunder of the churches, the enforced circulation of assignats, and the levy of contributions from the rich, they had obtained petitions from Liege, Ghent, and Brussels, requesting union and incorporation with the Republic. Dismissing these splendid visions, for a time, from their minds, the parties in the Convention began mutually to accuse each other of treachery. The enemies of Dumouriez were roused to redoubled rancour; alarm prevailed in the capital, the theatres and public places were shut, the black flag was exhibited on the church of Notre Dame, the country solemnly proclaimed in danger, and the citizens invoked to fly to arms, or all would be lost.

Plunder in
Flanders.

Alarm of the
Convention.

11th.
The country
proclaimed in
danger.

It could not escape observation, that, in his addresses to his troops, Dumouriez incessantly claimed their confidence in himself personally, and in his public dispatches made frequent and bold reproaches against the Convention. He found the people throughout Flanders in the highest degree irritated at the extortions and insults they had endured, and which he could neither defend nor obviate.

On his arrival at the general rendezvous near Tirlemont, he was attacked by the armies of the allies. The conflict lasted three days, and was conducted with great bravery on both sides; the allies, taking advantage of some mistakes made by the French general, decided the fate of the encounter; and Dumouriez, for the first time vanquished in a general engagement, was obliged to retreat toward the French frontier, with the loss of thirty-three pieces of cannon and a great

March 16th,
17th, 18th.
Dumouriez
defeated at
Tirlemont,

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22nd
and Louvain.
24th.
The French
expelled from
Flanders.

number of men slain and drowned. The victors pressed forward to reap the fruits of their success. In four days they again attacked the French on the high grounds near Louvain, routed them with the loss of two thousand men, and triumphantly entered Brussels. Breda, Gertruydenberg, Antwerp, Mons, Namur, and Ostend, surrendered, and before the end of March the French troops were driven back within the limits of their own frontier*.

State of Paris.

During these transactions, the Convention was agitated by daily motions, and the people harassed by perpetual criminations, brought forward by both parties with equal zeal and eagerness. The city of Paris was the centre of turbulence; plots of the most contradictory nature were said to exist, while pillage and every kind of violence were carried on without control.

Desertion of
Dumouriez.

The suspicions so long entertained by Marat against Dumouriez were now realised; he had entered into a treaty with the generals of the allied army, in consequence of which he had obtained a truce, and professed his intention of marching to Paris to reform the government; but he had not taken proper measures to secure the attachment of his soldiers, or the co-operation of his officers; and in his whole army he could only rely on Valence, Egalité, and Miaczinski. In his retreat from Flanders, he was met by deputies on mission from the Convention, to whom he explained his views. The Jacobins, he said, would ruin France; but he would save it, though they should call him a Cæsar, a Cromwell, or a Monk. There must be a king; but it was of little consequence whether it was a James, a Louis, or a Philip. Before this conversation was reported to the legislature, a decree had passed ordering him to the bar: and Bournonville, with four other commissioners, was sent to arrest him at the head of the army, and convey him to Paris. They halted at Lisle, and dispatched a summons to him to appear in that city, to answer the charges against him; but he

28th.

19th.

* For these events, see Journals and Gazettes; *Mémoires du General Dumouriez*, par lui-même, année 1793; Major Money's History of the Campaign, p. 272, et seq.

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replied, he could not leave his troops, and valued his life too much to submit it to an arbitrary tribunal. The commissioners proceeded to his head-quarters at St. Amand, explained the object of their mission, and endeavoured to persuade him to obedience. He attempted to vindicate his own conduct, and induce them to judge favourably of him; but, at length, finding that he made no impression, exclaimed, "It is time to put an end to this;" and ordered the commissioners to be seized and sent to the Prince de Cobourg, as hostages for the Royal Family.

He passed that night in composing an address to the army, and other papers. The address producing some favourable appearances in the camp, he returned to St. Amand, and harangued the corps of artillery, who also appeared satisfied; and, to testify his confidence in them, he slept there. The next morning he left his friend Thouvenot at St. Amand, and departed for Condé; but, within half a league of the fortress, a messenger, sent by General Neuilly, advised him not to approach, as the garrison was in a state of the utmost fermentation. He had just before met with a column of volunteers marching toward Condé; they made no attempt against him, until they saw him accosted by Neuilly's messenger, when they cried, "Stop! stop!" and commenced a pursuit. He mounted a horse belonging to young Egalité, and, escaping through a rapid discharge of musketry, crossed the Scheldt, and reached Wykers, whence he continued his route to Bury on foot, and spent the night in digesting the proclamation of the Prince de Cobourg, which appeared the next day, together with his own address to the French nation. The proclamation is conceived in manly, liberal, and conciliating terms; but neither that nor the address produced any effect. At day-break, Dumouriez, escorted by fifty imperial dragoons, proceeded to the advanced guard of the camp of Maulde, and harangued the troops; but although there was no declared opposition, he observed indications of that spirit, and several groups assembled. He then repaired to St. Amand; but, as he was entering the city,

3rd.

4th.

5th.

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was informed that the corps of artillery had, during the night, risen on their general, and were marching towards Valenciennes. Alarmed at this intelligence, he seized the military chest, and made his escape, accompanied by General and Colonel Thouvenot, young Egalité, Colonel Montjoye, and a few other persons of some distinction, and attended by seven hundred horse and eight hundred foot. The military chest was recaptured by the French*.

In considering the close of their military lives, the conduct of Dumouriez appears to great disadvantage in comparison with that of Lafayette. Both were unprincipled intriguers, and Dumouriez had shewn an infinite superiority in military conduct and daring enterprise. But when driven by disgust and fear to quit the service of his country, Lafayette sought only retirement into private life in a foreign land. He seduced none of his troops, carried away no public property, and never offered to redeem himself from captivity by serving in the armies or assisting in the councils of those who were at war with France.

* These events are taken from the Journals and Debates, and from *Mémoires du Général Dumouriez*, année 1793; Lacrételle, tome x. p. 275 to 308; *Victoires et Conquêtes*, tome i. p. 99-143; *La Vallée*, tome ii. p. 80; *Mémoires Politiques*, p. 215; *Homme d'Etat*, tome ii. p. 211.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTY-SECOND.

1793.

Parliamentary proceedings resumed.—Lord Auckland's memorial to the States-General—Mr. Sheridan's motion on it—Lord Stanhope's motion on the same subject.—Mr. Fox's motion for peace.—Mr. M. A. Taylor's motion on barracks.—Mr. Sheridan's motion on seditious practices.—Traitorous correspondence bill—moved by the Attorney-general—opposition—second reading—motion for a committee—clauses amended and expunged.—Motion by Mr. Adam—bill passes—House of Lords.—Observations.—Mr. Whitbread on the execution of the order in council—motion negatived.—Loan.—Commercial distress—causes—relief proposed.—Committee of the House of Commons—report—opposition—bill passed—its effects.—India.—Mr. Dundas's resolutions—bill opposed—passes.—Slave trade—Mr. Wilberforce moves a committee of the whole House—motion lost—further efforts.—Motion by the Earl of Abingdon.—The Duke of Clarence.—Lord Rawdon's bill on imprisonment for debt.—Parliamentary reform.—Borough of Stockbridge.—Nottingham petition—Sheffield petition—rejected—Norwich petition—petition of the Friends of the People.—Mr. Grey's motion—adjourned debate.—Mr. Francis—Lord Mornington—motion negatived.—Mr. Wharton's motion. Close of the Session.

DURING these transactions, the British Parliament continued to discuss various propositions arising out of the war, and rendered necessary by the state of the country.

When Dumouriez delivered up the French commissioners to the allies, but before the ulterior proceedings could be known, Lord Auckland, conjointly

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proceedings
resumed.

April 5.
Lord
Auckland's

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Memorial to
the States
General.

with the Count de Stahremberg, the Austrian minister, addressed to the Dutch government a memorial, stating that in the preceding September His Britannic Majesty, in concert with them, had given a solemn assurance, that in case the danger which threatened the lives of the French king and his family should be realized, they would take efficacious measures to prevent the guilty from finding an asylum in their dominions. "This event," it proceeded, "which was foreseen with horror, has taken place, and Divine vengeance seems not to have been tardy. Some of these detestable regicides are already in such a situation that they may be subjected to the sword of the law. The rest are still in the midst of a people whom they have plunged into an abyss of evils, and for whom famine, anarchy, and civil war are preparing new calamities. Every thing induces us to consider as at hand the end of these wretches, whose madness and atrocities have filled with terror and indignation all those who respect the principles of religion, morality, and humanity." They submitted, therefore, whether it would not be proper to employ all possible means to prohibit from entering their European or colonial dominions all members of the self-titled National Convention, or of the pretended executive council, who had directly or indirectly participated in the crime; and if they should be discovered and arrested, to deliver them up to justice, as a lesson and example to mankind.

25th.
Mr. Sheridan's
motion on it.

On this state paper, Mr. Sheridan founded a motion for an address to the King, importing that his ministers had departed from the principles on which the House was induced to concur in supporting the war, by announcing an intention, inconsistent with his repeated assurances that he would not interfere in the internal affairs of France; and praying that those portions of the memorial might be publicly disavowed.

This motion, Mr. Sheridan said, not only involved the character of ministers, but that of the whole nation. Every memorial to which Lord Auckland had affixed his name, since the first disturbances in France, was

marked by an officious and unbecoming ostentation ; instead of the moderate language of an ambassador, he used the dictatorial style of a viceroy. The paper in question was singularly indecent, for it plainly implied that the persons delivered up by the treachery of Dumouriez might be sacrificed, because they were in the hands of the Dutch. If the principle were followed up, would not the French retaliate, and would not a general massacre of all prisoners of war be the result ? As a personal argument, he adverted to some expressions, apparently recommending extermination, in a proclamation issued in the American war, while Lord Auckland was a commissioner, against which a very able protest had been entered on the journals of the House of Lords, drawn up, he believed, by Mr. Burke himself. He also dwelt amply on that infamous robbery, the partition of Poland. Allied as we were with Russia and Prussia, if a dismemberment of France were projected, we might be obliged to sanction it, and the precedent might be applied to us. They declared a prevalence of French principles in Poland ; his Majesty's proclamation, which asserted the same here, might be considered as an invitation to come and take care of us. The principle on which Dantzic and Thorn were subjugated, might be applied to England, if it became convenient to the confederates to make the experiment.

Mr. Pitt denied the construction put on the memorial. That an example should, if possible, be made of those who were guilty of the horrid murder of Louis, must be the sincere wish of all good men ; but we did not engage in the war for such an object as revenge or the punishment of crime not committed in this country. The memorial did not require that the commissioners should be sent to Maestricht ; they never were, and most probably never would be, in the custody of the Dutch. In consequence of the conduct and promises of Dumouriez, it was generally believed that a counter revolution would soon take place in France*.

Mr. Pitt.

* This observation is confirmed by a well-informed writer, who, nearly forty years afterward (in 1831), says, " It clearly appears, by the contents of this note,

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It was probable that some of those who now exercised the supreme authority might be obliged to fly into Holland; and the natural sense of the memorial was, that in such case, if proper tribunals were erected, such criminals should be given up for trial; but not that either the Dutch or the Austrians should take upon themselves to punish French regicides. Measures of ambition were as odious in a monarch as in a republican. No man could hear of the partition of Poland without the most profound detestation; but it became us, as a wise people, vigilantly to guard our own liberty, to conciliate affection, and to enforce esteem. The present war he hoped would restore peace to France and to Europe; but a concurrence with this motion would neither produce peace at home nor respect or security abroad.

Mr. Fox.

Mr. Curwen.

Mr. Fox defended the motion, eloquently enforcing the arguments of Mr. Sheridan; and Mr. Curwen was desirous to avoid dividing the House, as he considered the object completely gained in the minister's explicit disavowal of principles which must have made peace impossible. Mr. Sheridan agreed; but Mr. Whitmore insisting that the House should divide, because he had no faith in the professions of ministers, the motion was put and rejected by a great majority*.

June 17.
Lord
Stanhope's
motion.

Late in the session, Earl Stanhope moved a censure on the memorial, not less severe than that proposed by Mr. Sheridan, and prefaced it with a speech which far exceeded in acrimony that which the eloquent member of the lower House had pronounced. He adverted to Lord Auckland's proclamation in America, to that of General Burgoyne, and to the manifesto of the Duke of Brunswick: all these produced bad effects; but Herod, Nero, and Caligula had not left on record a proclamation so blood-thirsty as this. It was disgraceful to the country; a piece of studied ribaldry and industrious impertinence, no less non-

* that the ministers who signed it believed that the overthrow of the Convention was at hand. We may also affirm that this expectation was fully entertained by the other ministers and general officers, as well as the three princes who came to act at the Congress at Antwerp."—*Homme d'Etat*, tome ii. p. 229.

† 211 to 36.

sensical in design than injurious in its style; for the noble lord ought to have known that nothing was so easy as to make use of invective; that there is no argument in abuse; and that a man ought not to make use of hard words, unless he could support them by hard blows.

Lord Grenville answered this intemperate and undignified attack by explaining the terms which he considered to have been misrepresented, and moved an amendment expressing approbation of the memorial.

The Duke of Clarence, although pre-determined to vote against the motion, would not assent to an amendment calculated to bestow applause on a measure which, however free from any criminal motive or bad intention, was not entitled to praise.

The Earl of Carlisle explained his conduct in America, for the purpose of separating himself from those gentlemen, Nero, Caligula, and Herod, whom the noble lord had introduced into his puppet-show; and the Earl of Guildford moved the previous question, when Lord Auckland entered into an explanation of the paper; the true meaning of which he stated, as Mr. Pitt had, not to be that the Dutch should put the captive commissioners to death, but that they might, at a proper time, be delivered up to a French court of justice, to be tried for their crimes. This was the prayer of the memorial, from which alone its true intent could be collected. He would not, he said, condescend to notice the words applied to the memorial by the noble earl, who had talked of "official interference," "impertinence," and "ribaldry;" but would be content with leaving it to the judgment of their lordships whether such language was most applicable to him who had uttered it, or to himself.

Earl Stanhope's motion, as well as that for the previous question, being negatived, Lord Grenville's was agreed to without a division.

Contemporaneous with this motion, was one by Mr. Fox, who again essayed a proposal for an address, requesting his Majesty to employ the earliest means for procuring peace on terms consistent with the pro-

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Lord Grenville

Duke of Clarence.

Other peers.

Lord Auckland.

June 17.
Mr. Fox's
motion for
peace.

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fessed objects of the war, and with good faith, strict justice, and liberal and enlightened policy.

This motion was prefaced with a speech, in which all former topics were recapitulated: the state of Holland, the conduct of Russia and Prussia, the partition of Poland, the expense of war, the possibility of obtaining an indemnity in the West Indies, and the impolicy of continuing hostilities after the aggression that provoked them was at an end. A question had been asked, whether we were to treat with France in its present state? To which he would answer, yes; with him, or them, be he or they whom they might, who had the government in their hands, we ought, and ultimately must, treat. Were we to fight with them until they should obtain a legally established government? What reason had we to expect, what means to enforce it? Let them undergo the miseries arising from their own confusion; but were the people of England to suffer because the people of France were unjust? France had no power to injure us, and we could conclude peace with safety to ourselves and to our allies. The National Convention, the city of Paris, all the people of France, were convinced that a peace with this country was for them the most desirable of all objects. He adverted to a rumour, that some of the most efficient officers of the crown were friends to peace; that he was supported in his opinion on the war by some persons high in his Majesty's councils; and he invoked the House to recollect, as an example, the American war.

Mr. Windham.

Mr. Windham said, that, although an intention to aim at the establishment of any particular form of government in France had been disclaimed, he conceived an endeavour to procure some government that we might safely treat with, to be an avowed purpose of the war, and warned the House against dissolving, through a desire of peace, the present confederacy, until it had fully attained the great objects for which it was formed.

Mr. Burke.

Mr. Burke said, the motion involved a question which would decide for ever our connexions with the

Continent; whether we should make war with all the powers of Europe, in order to make peace with France? The proposed address contained a bitter invective against the three greatest potentates, and could only be useful if we meant to provoke them without an object, and to set this country at war with all Europe. When Charles the Twelfth disposed of Poland, and gave it to another king, we did not call upon France to assist us in rescuing that nation; for, with respect to us, she might be considered as a country in the moon. One grand sophistry pervaded Mr. Fox's speeches, that we made war on France, while, in fact, she made the war, and that, too, at a time when Dumouriez was affecting to treat with us. It was a delusion, he said, that nations were not, in certain cases, to interfere with each other; and he drew a picture of a British ambassador making the amende honorable before the National Convention; to have the first blood in the land sent to make the amende more complete; there he should be standing in a white sheet with a torch in his hand, all the ghastly regicides in rows before him, the president shaking the bloody head of Louis the Sixteenth to make the amende more horrible; which being accomplished, Danton, with his bloody jaws, would give him a civic kiss in token of adoption.

Mr. Pitt, considering the speech of the mover as a solemn expression of his sentiments on the present state of affairs, declared it to be most impolitic and preposterous; contradictory to general principles, and unsuitable to the particular circumstances of the country. Were we to be content merely with the French relinquishing their conquests, unjustly made, without either obtaining reparation for injuries, or security against their future repetition? In case of irresistible necessity, we might be compelled to adopt such conduct; but it would be strange were we, at the beginning of a most successful war, to do that which could only be advisable at the conclusion of one most disastrous. In a negotiation for peace, we should have neither the good faith of a nation, nor the responsibility

Mr. Pitt.

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of a monarch, to rely on. The moment that the mob of Paris acted under the influence of a new leader, mature deliberations would be reversed, and the most solemn engagements retracted. Should we treat with Marat, before we had finished the negotiation, he might again have descended back to the dregs of the people, and given place to a still more desperate villain. A band of leaders had swayed the mob in constant succession, all resembling in guilt, but each striving to improve on the crimes of his predecessor, and swell the black catalogue with new modes and higher gradations of wickedness—

“Ætas parentum pejor avis tulit
Nos nequiores, mox daturos
Progeniem vitiosiore.”

Adverting to Mr. Fox's observation that differences of opinion prevailed in the cabinet, Mr. Pitt altogether denied its truth, and trusted, that if the honorable gentleman should be a member of any government, he would be better acquainted with the proceedings of the councils of other nations, than at present he seemed to be with those of his own.

Motion
rejected.

February 22.

Several other members spoke shortly, and Mr. Fox made a reply; the motion was negatived on a division*.

As one of the proceedings relating to the war, it may be mentioned, that, at an early period of the session, Mr. Michael Angelo Taylor made a motion on the subject of barracks, founded on the opposition always given to them by our ancestors; and he embodied in his motion an observation of Blackstone. His speech, and those which it occasioned, were not devoid of information or eloquence, but not at this period deserving of notice.

February 28.

Without a division, the House voted for proceeding to the other orders of the day.

Mr. Sheridan's
motion on sedi-
tious practices.

In reference to the paragraph in the King's speech in which seditious practices and publications were mentioned, Mr. Sheridan moved that the House should

* 187 to 47.

resolve itself into a committee to consider the subject. His speech was a series of brilliant allusions to former declarations of the ministers and their supporters, and vigorous attacks on the system now pursued. The unexpected convocation of Parliament and the alarms of sedition and treason were a mere fraud used to divert attention for a while, and then to lead the people more easily into a war. These alarms were increased until clubs and associations were formed, ostensibly for protection against republicans and levellers. They had endeavoured, by punishing the distributors, to prevent the circulation of Paine's book, and the Jockey Club, works which for many months had been spread all over the country by the connivance of ministers, some of whom had formerly indulged a disposition not to treat the high powers of this country with the greatest respect. "What care I for the King's birth-day? What is the King's birth-day to me?" or some such coarse expression, had, he believed, been uttered by a noble duke some time since*. In the course of the summer, the Chancellor of the Exchequer with all due solemnity had taken upon himself the laborous office of Warden of the Cinque Ports, and, having conducted himself in it with equal satisfaction to his hosts and to his guests, returned to town without danger; but as the meeting of Parliament approached, the whole country was said to be threatened with destruction. He alluded to the altered opinion of Mr. Windham, who only in the last session had rolled His Majesty's ministers in the dirt, and Mr. Burke who, seeing nothing but a black and clouded sky, a bleak desert of opposition, without a shrub or bush to shelter him, had taken refuge from the approaching storm under the ministerial gaberdine. All this alarm was created to divert attention from the great question of parliamentary reform. The Duke of Richmond, formerly so great an advocate for that measure, had so

* This improper exclamation was imputed to the Duke of Richmond about the year 1780; it was said to be used in the House of Lords; but, although it was much repeated, and many comments made at the time, I do not find it in the Parliamentary Reports.

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elevated himself of late upon fortifications of his own creating, that he was now able to discover plots, conspiracies, and treasons, under the garb of parliamentary or any other reform. The mail-coaches had been stopped; the Duke stationed himself, among other curiosities, at the Tower; the Lord Mayor had found out that at the King's Arms in Cornhill was a debating society, where people went to buy treason at sixpence a head; where it was retailed to them by the glimmering of an inch of candle, and five minutes, to be measured by a glass, were allowed to each traitor to perform his part in overturning the state. He ridiculed the advertisements for apprehending John Frost and Captain Perry, the editor of a paper called the *Argus*; and many transactions and reports; and alluded to the burning of Mr. Dundas in effigy by the people of Scotland. It was said, too, that numbers were kept in pay, drilled and disciplined in dark rooms by a serjeant in a brown coat; and that, on a certain signal, they were to sally forth from porter rooms and back parlours and subvert the constitution. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not so stiff-necked and lofty—if he would condescend to mix in public meetings, he would not be led into errors which were derived from those who practised with too much success on his credulity. He then touched upon the addresses transmitted from patriots in pot-houses to the National Convention; one of them was signed by Mr. Hardy, an honest shoemaker, who little dreamt, God help him! how near he had been overturning the constitution. He recommended Mr. Grey to persevere in his intention of moving for a parliamentary reform; but he advised him not to make any profession on the occasion; not to promise that as a man and a minister he would support reform; nor to say that, unhackneyed in the ways of men, he would pursue only the paths of plain dealing and honesty; in a word, not to say that the times were not good enough for him; for all this had been said by Mr. Pitt, who had shewn that he was a stranger to the performance of the most solemn engagements, and that if he could not accommodate

himself to the times, he would make the times accommodate themselves to him.

The speech presented here in an extremely abridged form, however adorned with the eloquence and wit of the orator, appears only a miscellaneous collection of common place matter from the newspapers, and scurrilous assertions calculated to supply them with topics in time to come ; but it had a deeper and more insidious intent ; it was a defence, before the time, of persons and practices which were destined to prosecution, and an attack by anticipation on Mr. Pitt, in support of Mr. Grey's expected motion. A series of speeches followed, in which personality was profusely vented and reasoning proportionally scarce. The debate was sustained on one side by Mr. Lambton, Mr. Fox, Colonel Macleod, and Major Maitland ; on the other, by Mr. Windham, the Lord Mayor, and Mr. Burke. The value of the motion was declared by its fate : it was negatived without a division.

According to a notice he had given, the Attorney-general moved to bring in a bill for preventing traitorous correspondence. It would prohibit the selling or delivering, for the use of the French government or armies, any of the articles specified, such as arms, military stores, provisions, bullion, or woollen cloths, under penalty of high treason, but not to attain the blood, or debar the next heir from inheritance. It would prevent persons from purchasing, or lending money on lands in France, or from dealing in their funds ; for as they professed to carry on the war against us by the sale of lands, we might, by allowing our subjects to purchase, give them an interest in the property acquired, while we furnished the enemy with the means of carrying on war against ourselves. His third object was, that no persons should be allowed to go from this country into France without a license under the great seal, the neglecting to obtain it to be a misdemeanour ; and that no person, although a subject of this country, coming from France, should be allowed to land without a passport or a license. If unprovided,

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Motion
negatived.

March 15th
Traitorous
correspon-
dence bill.
Moved by the
Attorney-
general.

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they must be obliged to deliver in a declaration to the master of the vessel which conveyed them, who should immediately transmit it to the Secretary of State, and in the mean time the passenger should be restrained to the place of landing or a specific distance, until he received permission to proceed, or gave security for good behaviour. The last clause was to prevent the insurance of vessels either proceeding from or going to France.

Mr. Fox.

Mr. Fox would not lose even that, the first opportunity, to express his disapprobation of a bill so useless, unjust, and impolitic. On the general principle that in all free countries the possession and transmission of property were intitled to the highest protection, he censured the restraint on the purchase of land in France. He was equally adverse to restraining our countrymen from engaging in the funds of any country; or that those who were at war with us were not to have their property considered as sacred. As to the supply of arms, he observed, that considering all wars in Europe rather as financial than military contests, he questioned whether we should not find it advantageous to sell to the enemy weapons of war, while we had prompt payment at our own price. He deemed the prohibition of Englishmen going to France without a passport as the least exceptionable clause; but the provision against their returning was monstrous; it would enable the King to banish, during the war, every British subject then in France. The requisition of security, at the discretion of a magistrate, might banish from the land the most meritorious subject, because he was obnoxious to ministers. The insurance of ships belonging to France was a question which did not involve any principle; to prevent Englishmen from paying the losses of the French was right enough; but, in truth, the premium was always more than equal to the risk, and the balance was in favour of the underwriter. The whole bill was entirely unnecessary; in many parts repugnant to the common principles of justice, in some foolish, and he believed

it brought forward with the view only of disseminating false and injurious ideas of correspondences and dangers which did not exist.

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General
opposition.

In every stage of its progress the bill was strenuously opposed ; but the arguments on both sides were soon exhausted, and the discussions were maintained on particular points of enactment, on the application of general principles to the separate clauses, on the previous conduct and expression of individuals, and on phrases used in the course of debate, and against the precipitancy shewn in urging the measure to a conclusion.

On the motion for a second reading, Mr. Curwen stood forward as a strenuous opponent, and Mr. Frederick North, generally adverse to ministers, vigorously defended the bill.

21st.
Second
reading.

Mr. Fox strongly objected to the motion for going into a committee, and deprecated the hurrying on of such a measure ; to this, Mr. Pitt made the obvious answer, that if gentlemen had satisfied themselves that the bill was ineffectual, impolitic, and tyrannical, they surely must, without further preparation, be ready to state their objections decisively.

Motion for a
committee.

The Attorney-general, after vindicating the bill, as founded on one which had passed at the era of the revolution, defended the clause which prohibited the return of British subjects. The party landing might easily gain his freedom by giving proper security to any neighbouring justice of the peace, or, by appealing to the courts at Westminster, obtain exemption from all restraint. The question was carried by a great majority*.

Attorney-
general.

In the committee, Mr. Burke animadverted on the principles maintained in France, and the danger of their contamination extending to us. He descanted on their domiciliary visits, their revolutionary tribunal, and their bland fraternity (*douce fraternité*), anxiously deprecating all attempts to force them on this country. In support of his opinions, he read from the *Moniteur* a speech of citizen La Source in the Convention. "The

22nd.
Mr. Burke.

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“ moment is not yet arrived in which may be seen at
“ the bar of the revolutionary tribunal that Orestes
“ of the British Parliament, the madman Burke, the
“ insolent Lord Grenville, or the plotter Pitt ; but the
“ moment is arrived in which the public have summoned them to the bar of their opinion ; the moment
“ is arrived in which they are consigned to the detestation of all nations, whose execrations and anathemas
“ they so richly deserve.” Much more of the same kind of ferocious ribaldry followed ; and making various comments, Mr. Burke observed, that there was a vast difference between a well-tempered vigilance, which calmly pointed out to an administration the errors of their plans and the necessity of changing them, and the frivolous, cavilling, vexatious, petulant opposition, which thwarted every thing, from obstinacy, peevishness, and envy.

Mr. Hardinge.

Mr. Hardinge made a speech in support of the bill, which is chiefly remarkable for one passage. With respect to commerce, so far as this bill touched upon it, he would cut the knot, and say, “ let it perish, if, to
“ keep it alive, the war must be fed by the expenditure
“ of more blood, and by the increased peril of all that
“ was dear to us.” This phrase was converted into a political bye-word ; but as an attack upon Mr. Hardinge was comparatively of small importance, the words “ perish commerce ” were imputed to Mr. Windham ; and no denial on his part, no avowal on that of their real author, could prevent speakers and writers, for many years afterward, from imputing them to the person by whom they had never been uttered*.

26th, 28th.
April 4th.
Clauses
amended and
expunged.

In debating the clause which made it high treason in any of the King’s subjects to supply the French with the enumerated articles, Mr. Fox observed, that it necessarily included the people of Ireland, and, consequently, went to legislate for that country. After some discussion, this section was amended, by confining the operation of the statute to Great Britain. That

* Whether this misrepresentation originated with him or not, I cannot assert ; but it received much support, at least, from an able and popular writer, who assumed the name of Jasper Wilson.—Letters, Commercial and Political, to Mr. Pitt, pp. 40, 42.

which prohibited the return of any of his Majesty's subjects from France without permission was also expunged.

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Triumphing on this concession, and referring to some observations which had been made, and to a proclamation recently issued, Mr. Whitbread enquired whether the King was empowered by law to issue a proclamation forbidding the return into this country of any subject not convicted of a crime?

Mr. Whitbread

Without hesitation, the Solicitor-general answered, that, upon the general policy of the country, his Majesty had a right to make such a regulation.

Solicitor-general.

Mr. Fox vehemently reprobated this doctrine. If it were correct, the King, under the specious mask of regulating the general policy of the realm, had the power of expelling from his native land for ever any person he might think proper. If it were so, it was high time to examine into the expediency of suffering such a prerogative to continue.

Mr. Fox.

When the report of the committee was brought up, Mr. Adam attempted to introduce a clause, securing to persons who might be tried under this act, as to others accused of high treason, a copy of the indictment or information, a list of the jury and witnesses, and a full defence by counsel.

April 8.
Motion by Mr. Adam.

Mr. Fox observed, that of all the characters of cruelty, that was the most odious which assumed the garb of mercy. Under pretence of lenity to the accused, in not subjecting him to corruption of blood, he was to be denied the means of making his defence. Harshness and severity were to be substituted for tenderness and compassion; and then he was to be insulted by being told he was spared the corruption of blood! On a division, the clause was rejected*.

Mr. Fox.

On the motion that the bill do pass, the principles and enactments were reviewed; the principal opponent was Mr. Fox, who was answered by Mr. Burke. Their speeches displayed their acknowledged ability; but, after so many discussions, novelty could no longer be

9th.
Bill passed.

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1793.
15th, 22nd.
House of
Lords.

produced. The House divided, and the bill was carried*.

In the House of Lords, two debates took place, in which great ability and knowledge were displayed. Some amendments showed the vigilance of the peers; but nothing in the discussions claimed particular notice.

One division took place, and the result was a great majority in favour of the measure†.

Observations.

By this act, the merchants of London were, for the first time, forbidden to receive premiums for insuring the commercial vessels of the enemy, and from making or procuring insurances upon military, ordnance, and naval stores; on metals, whether precious or serviceable; grain, and various kinds of provisions; leather, wrought or unwrought, from any part of the world to the French territories. The regulation, obviously intended to distress the enemy, by preventing them from obtaining indispensable supplies, is capable of much support from specious argument; but, in reality, it was rather plausible than wise. If Great Britain maintained the naval ascendancy, of which she was justly believed to be capable, the premiums which must necessarily be paid, would have encumbered the commerce of the enemy with a weight which would leave it almost unproductive. That the desire of gain should occasion treasonable communications to secure the safety of mercantile fleets, was not to be apprehended; but it might reasonably be foreseen that such a new and severe restriction would separate the two countries to a degree which would render a future good understanding additionally difficult, and create, by entire cessation of intercourse, a spirit of ferocious rancour, ever to be dreaded between neighbouring and civilized nations.

Mr. Whitbread
on the execu-
tion of the

An opportunity soon occurred for bringing under

* 154 to 53. By an error of the press, no doubt, the Parliamentary History, vol. xxx. p. 647, gives the numbers 154 to 153; so that it would seem as if this important measure was decided at last by a majority of one only. But the return is correctly stated in the Journals, and in Rivington's Annual Register, vol. xxxv. p. 294.

† 62 to 7.

discussion the doctrine advanced by the Solicitor-general on the King's prerogative and the effect of an order in council, and a proclamation issued in consequence.

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1793.
order in coun-
cil.
May 9th.

After repeating many of the arguments used by Mr. Fox on the subject, Mr. Whitbread stated the treatment received by some English subjects, who, being obliged to quit France by virtue of the decree of the Convention, had been prevented from landing at Dover by certain officers, who required passports from Mr. Dundas. Some who contrived to land, by means of a boat, were taken by an officer from Bow Street, carried back to the packet, detained five days, and then discharged by the order of Mr. Dundas. A proceeding equally illegal, whether there was or was not a charge to be exhibited against them; in the one case, they ought not to have been taken into custody; in the other, they should not have been discharged without investigation; and he moved for a committee to inquire into these facts.

Mr. Dundas answered, that if the proclamation was tyrannical and unconstitutional, his Majesty's law advisers had copied it from a long chain of precedents established in the best of times. It was an axiom generally admitted by all nations, that war suspended all intercourse between belligerent powers. Among the modifications of this principle, introduced by milder manners and a more liberal policy, was that of licensing certain packet boats carrying mails. France had thought proper wholly to interrupt that intercourse. The King of England did not take such a step, but merely provided that, by preserving the communication for the benefit of his people, he should not open a door to evils still greater than could ensue from its suppression. This was the ground of the order in council. With respect to the particular case; the first account he received of it was in a letter from Mr. Bell, commander of the packet, stating, that while he was on shore at Calais, a number of persons, chiefly English, got on board his vessel in his absence, and without his knowledge; he requested them to return, for it was

Answer of
Mr. Dundas.

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not in his power to land them without passports; but they refused, and began to weigh the anchor, so that he was obliged to steer for England; and, after a due examination, at the end of three days, the British subjects were allowed to land, and proceed without molestation. It appeared that some of them were Englishmen of suspicious character, two servants of the Duke of Orléans, and some whose conduct in France could not give much satisfaction. But, in fact, Parliament ought never to interfere, except to redress grievances which were beyond the reach of the ordinary courts; if these parties were aggrieved, they might bring actions, and so compel him to answer for his conduct.

Motion
negatived.

Mr. Francis and Mr. Fox gave a momentary life to the debate; but the motion was negatived without a division.

March 11.
Loan.

To provide for the expenses of the war, a loan of four millions and a half was required: the debt created in the three per cent. funds would somewhat exceed six millions. The interest to be defrayed by taxes amounted to two hundred and forty thousand pounds, including one per cent. for the redemption of the capital. The imposts were light and easy, and no serious opposition was offered either to the principle or details, although Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Fox most properly expressed their determination to carry their vigilance on financial proceedings to the extent of jealousy.

Commercial
distress.

From the latter part of the last year, a general interruption of commercial confidence had taken place; mercantile houses of the highest character had been obliged to suspend their payments, and many had entirely failed; the Gazette exhibited an appalling display of bankruptcies, the number in November being one hundred and five: more than treble the amount of the month preceding, and far beyond any similar period before recorded. This alarming indication of commercial distress went on increasing until April, when it reached to two hundred and nine, and in the two following months was one hundred and fifty-eight and one hundred and eight*.

* A monthly table, including, with a few omissions, all the years from 1700

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Causes.

For this calamity, various causes were assigned. The parties most opposed to government attributed it chiefly, if not entirely, to the war; while those on the other side contended, that it was not in any manner connected with that event; the first display of distress having been in November, when hostilities had not only not commenced, but the great events which led to them had not yet occurred. It were too much to assert this proposition in its whole extent, but if war, or the probability of it, increased, it certainly did not occasion the calamity. For several years past, great sums had been invested in machinery and inland navigation projects, in which much capital must be immediately employed on the chance of a remuneration to be derived from an extended commercial prosperity. Country banks had been increased during the same period; their number is not ascertained, but the lowest computations fix them at two hundred and eighty, while the higher makes them exceed four hundred. The eagerness of these companies to force their notes into circulation, while it greatly distressed and ultimately ruined many of them (for more than one hundred failed), aggravated the public distress, and spread ruin among those with whom they were connected. Many, whom temporary assistance, even to a moderate amount, would have relieved from difficulty, were crushed in the general panic, and many, who afterward proved that they had property abundantly sufficient to meet all demands, were obliged, for a time, to refuse payment. It was impossible to raise money upon the security of machinery or shares of canals; for the value of such property seemed to be annihilated in the gloomy apprehensions of the sinking state of the country, its commerce, and manufactures; and those who possessed money, not knowing where they could place it with safety, kept it unemployed, and even feared to deposit it with their bankers*.

Some of the most eminent merchants in London

to 1793, is in *An Estimate of the Comparative Strength of Great Britain*. By George Chalmers, Esq. Edit 1810, p. 291.

* Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*, vol. iv. p. 266. Also Chalmers' *Estimate*.

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1793.
April 23rd.
Relief
proposed.

25th.
Committee of
the House of
Commons.
Report.

having had an interview with Mr. Pitt, eleven gentlemen, selected from among them, met at the Mansion House, and unanimously agreed that the interposition of Parliament was necessary, and that an issue of exchequer bills, under certain regulations and stipulations, was the best practicable remedy.

On the motion of Mr. Pitt, a select committee was appointed, to take into consideration the state of commercial credit. A report was soon presented by the Lord Mayor, in which the subject in all its bearings was methodically reviewed; and in the result, it was recommended that power should be given to issue exchequer bills to an amount not exceeding five millions, in sums of one hundred, fifty, and twenty pounds, to bear an interest of two-pence half-penny per cent. per day*, and to be payable at four periods, ending on the last day of May in the following year. That, for issuing such bills, commissioners, acting upon oath, and without fee or reward, should be appointed. The advances were to be made on the security of goods to be deposited with officers named by the commissioners, in London, Bristol, Hull, Liverpool, Leith, and Glasgow, or on satisfactory personal securities of a given number of persons; and, on failure of repayment, according to the stipulations, the commissioners were to sell by public auction so much as might be necessary of the goods deposited, or to proceed against the sureties.

Opposition. These propositions were in themselves so obviously benevolent and reasonable, that little objection could be expected, except in the form of general declamation. Mr. Jekyll, blaming the executive government for the state of affairs which rendered such an intervention necessary, considered that melancholy report as the knell of our commerce. The paper circulation, through the medium of country banks, would, if not guarded against, be the ruin of our paper credit. Mr. Fox and Mr. Grey tendered some objections to going into a committee. They urged the possibility of loss upon the

* £3 18s. 3d. per annum.

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advances; the danger to the constitution from investing government with the whole commercial influence of the country, and the propriety of an interference by the Bank; but Mr. Pitt's motion for a committee was agreed to without a division.

In the committee, Mr. Francis inquired for what reason the Directors of the Bank of England had not been invited to undertake the management and distribution of the proposed relief; they must, of course, possess more information than could be found in a board of commissioners newly appointed. Mr. Pitt answered that the Bank had declined interfering, because the species of security to be given was such as they had not been accustomed to receive; the measure was temporary; their practice on discounts permanent. Mr. M. A. Taylor believed that by mercantile men the measure was considered absurd and ridiculous; but two eminent commercial individuals, Mr. Alderman Curtis and Mr. Alderman Anderson, and Mr. Chiswell, who had no mercantile connexion, assured him that, by persons engaged in such transactions, the measure was not derided, but regarded with hope and approbation; and that to withhold it, would produce most serious mischiefs.

On the supposed extension of influence and display of political impartiality, Mr. Dundas observed that he should think the country had arrived, indeed, at a very alarming degree of depravity, if twenty gentlemen could not be found who would perform fairly, upon oath, the functions of the commission, without regarding whether the persons who applied to them appeared in red or yellow capes, in blue and buff, or any other colour*. The bill passed without much further difficulty; and, far from party influence prevailing in the appointment of commissioners, several gentlemen not at all distinguished for their attachment to the existing government were among the number.

Not to return to this subject, it will be sufficient

* It may be necessary to explain that a blue coat with buff facings, lining, or a buff waistcoat, was the acknowledged dress of the opposition party; those of the other side surmounted a blue coat with a red or orange collar, and termed it the Windsor uniform.

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to state the results of the measure. The whole nation was supported and soothed by it. Its advantages were evinced by a speedy restoration of confidence in mercantile transactions, producing a facility in raising money that was presently felt, not only in the metropolis, but throughout the whole extent of Great Britain. The difficulties in which many commercial houses were involved were thus removed, and the fatal effects of those difficulties on other houses which were dependent on them were prevented. Nor was the operation of the act less beneficial with respect to eminent manufacturers, who were enabled to resume works which they had suspended, and afford employment to many who must otherwise have been thrown on the public for support. The delicacy so essentially necessary in matters of private credit was punctually observed; the names of those who availed themselves of the public relief were never mentioned.

From the report of the commissioners, presented to Parliament in the following year, it appeared that the whole number of applications for assistance was only three hundred and thirty-two; the knowledge that loans could be obtained having, in several instances, sufficed to render them unnecessary, insomuch that the total of the sums applied for was only £3,855,624. The whole was repaid; a considerable part before it became due, and the remainder at the stated periods, without any apparent difficulty or distress. With the exception of two only, who became bankrupts, the parties assisted were ultimately solvent, and, in many instances, possessed of great property*.

April 23rd.
India.
Mr. Dundas's
resolutions.

On a petition from the Company for renewal of their charter, Mr. Dundas introduced thirty-three resolutions for the future government of our possessions in India, by a speech, on which Mr. Pitt afterward observed, that, for comprehensive knowledge of the history and of the various sources of the British commerce to that country, it might have been equalled in that house, but had never been excelled†. He asserted

* Chalmers's Estimate, p. 298. Macpherson's Annals of Commerce, vol. iv. p. 300.

† Debates, May 24th. Parliamentary History, vol. xxx. p. 944.

that the territory governed by Great Britain was in a state of prosperity unknown under the most wise and politic of its ancient sovereigns. Our possessions, compared with those of the neighbouring powers, were like a cultivated garden opposed to the field of the sluggard. The revenues had increased, and the trade was in a state of progressive improvement. A war, as inevitable as it was politic, had been conducted with vigour, and brought to an honourable and advantageous conclusion.

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Mr. Francis, considering the relation in which he so long stood to the government of India, and the part he had acted, could not hear such assertions without indignation, contradiction, and resistance. On the propriety of renewing the charter he agreed, but protested against continuing the government in the hands of a company of merchants. The principles, facts, and arguments of the mover of the resolutions, were all alike, and only fit to keep company with one another.

Mr. Francis

The resolutions were agreed to, and a bill founded on them being brought in, Mr. Fox objected to the effect it would have in augmenting the influence of the Crown, of which, thirteen years ago, the House had declared that it had increased, was increasing, and ought to be diminished. His objection was founded on a clause which empowered the King to nominate three officers, who were to receive large salaries from the Company. Mr. Pitt explained that these were not new appointments, but merely a change in the description of persons capable of holding them, who were no longer required to be privy counsellors.

May 13.
Bill opposed
by Mr. Fox.

When the report was brought up, Mr. Fox renewed his opposition, still appealing to those who, in 1780, had voted against the influence of the Crown; he was determined to take the sense of the House that night; and, if unsuccessful, then in every future stage to resist this particular clause. The House giving their decision in its favour by a large majority*, Mr.

17th.
Further
Opposition.

* 113 to 42.

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Slave Trade.
February 26.
Mr. Wilber-
force moves a
committee of
the whole
House.

Sir William
Young.

Fox again obtained divisions, on the questions for the third reading and the passing of the bill, and twice again was foiled, though probably not disappointed*.

To accelerate the abolition of the slave trade, Mr. Wilberforce moved for a committee of the whole House on a day nearly approaching, but would not induce an argument on the general question; considering his motion almost as one of course, being only preliminary to the renewal of resolutions carried last year by a considerable majority.

Sir William Young did, however, oppose the motion; he had, in the last summer, visited most of the English islands, and could say, that a great portion of what he had heard in that House respecting the condition of the negroes was unfounded. Having viewed their villages on many estates, he had seen as many children in each as could be found in any village of the same size in England. This would serve to shew that the necessity of importation might be gradually diminished; and the plantations worked by Creoles instead of Africans. The condition of the slaves had been considerably amended; the act for regulating the middle passage had been productive of very happy consequences; many improvements had been adopted in the colonial assemblies tending greatly to better the condition of these poor people; and he made the accustomed motion of *quietus*, that the committee should sit on that day six months.

Mr. Cawthorne

In the course of the debate, Mr. Cawthorne intimated that the votes of the House had been influenced by delusions, and particularized the case of Captain Kimber and the witnesses against him. Mr. Fox observed, on this point, that the case ought not to have been adverted to, as it was not regularly before them; he would only say, in the most constitutional language he could, that as Captain Kimber had been acquitted, he hoped and trusted he was innocent; but he believed no one voted for the resolutions solely on the represen-

Mr. Fox.

Mr. Pitt.
Motion lost.

* 123 to 30, and 132 to 26.

tation of that transaction. Mr. Pitt united with Mr. Fox in supporting the original motion ; but it was lost on a division*.

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This refusal of the House to renew their vote gave great uneasiness to the friends of the cause ; but that the session might not pass without an attempt to promote it, Mr. Wilberforce moved to bring in a bill for abolishing that part of the trade by which British merchants supplied foreigners with slaves. This motion was opposed like the former ; but was carried by a majority of seven†. The bill passed its first and second reading with little opposition ; but was ultimately lost, by a majority of two only‡.

Further efforts.

May 14.

June 12.

Mr. Wilberforce had also attempted to introduce a bill to limit and regulate the importation of slaves to the British colonies, for a time to be limited ; but permission was refused§.

May 14.

Before this determination, the Lords had discussed a motion, made by the Earl of Abingdon, for terminating, by an adjournment for five months, the further proceeding of the investigation before them. The speech of his lordship was violent and eccentric. He considered the proposed abolition as a portion of that new philosophy which, like Pandora's box, contained all possible evils and vices. With great fury he attacked those monsters in human shape, as he termed them, the people of France ; monsters who, verifying the description given of them by Voltaire, had shewn themselves to be a race descended from monkeys and tigers. The proposition for abolishing the slave trade, meant, in effect, liberty and equality ; the rights of man ; the foolish fundamental principles of this new philosophy. These petitions, which, savouring of the times, were like those which preceded the grand rebellion in 1640, as illegal, ought not to have been received ; but being received, ought wholly to be disregarded.

April 11.
Motion by
the Earl of
Abingdon.

The Duke of Clarence, after some observations on the importance of the trade, in which an immense

The Duke
Clarence.

* 61 to 53.

† 41 to 34.

‡ 31 to 29. Clark's History of the Abolition of the Slave Trade, vol ii.
p 463.

§ 35 to 25.

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capital was embarked, ascribed the origin of the present question to Mr. Ramsay, on whose character he made some severe reflections. His royal highness asserted, that the promoters of the abolition were either fanatics or hypocrites, and in one of those classes he ranked Mr. Wilberforce.

Lord Grenville

Lord Grenville warmly vindicated the character of that gentleman, describing him as an ornament to human nature; and the royal Duke promptly and amply apologized for, and retracted, his indiscreet expressions.

The Earl of Abingdon's motion was withdrawn, and the examination of witnesses proceeded.

March 27.

Lord
Rawdon's
bill on impri-
sonment for
debt.

Without detailing the particulars of debate, it may be mentioned as one of the efforts in favour of humanity, that Lord Rawdon introduced a bill for amending the law of imprisonment for debt before judgment, on what is termed mesne process. Its first proposition was, that instead of ten pounds, a debt of twenty pounds at least must be sworn to, before an arrest could take place. The bill went into a committee; but was strenuously opposed both by the Lord Chancellor and Lord Thurlow, and, on a motion for recommitment, rejected on a division*.

May 31.

Parliamentary
Reform.

One subject of debate yet remains to be mentioned; one on which persevering appeals had been made to the public, both by societies and by individuals, which had formed the theme of pamphlets, speeches, resolutions, and addresses in all parts of the country,—the Reform of Parliament. Nor were the professed and public grounds the only motives of those who patronized and stimulated these proceedings: they hoped to embarrass Mr. Pitt, on whichever side he should declare himself. If he countenanced some of the petitions, he would be represented as approving of the associations from which they proceeded; if he opposed them, his former declarations and motions would afford ample topics against him†.

While petitions on this subject were being presented, a bill for preventing bribery and corruption

* 10 to 5. † Tomline's Life of Pitt.—Memoirs of Lord Liverpool, p. 62.

in the election of members of Parliament for Stockbridge was under discussion, a report from a committee on a petition shewed that, before the last election, a club of electors had been formed, who appointed a common agent; they debated on their own corruption; settled the sum that each should receive for his vote, and the security he was to require for the payment.

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1793.
March 18.
Borough of
Stockbridge.

When this bill was awaiting a second reading, Mr. Salusbury moved to bring in one to disfranchise those electors who by the report had been declared guilty of bribery and corruption: some doubts were expressed as to the propriety of pursuing both measures; but Mr. Fox approved of separating the two objects of the report. This was a bill of pains and penalties, and he would require satisfactory evidence to be given at the bar, of the guilt of those who were implicated.

April 10th.

Mr. Francis, on the contrary, deemed the bill partial and unjust in its immediate operation, and penal, useless, ineffectual and likely to be injurious rather than beneficial in its ultimate results.

Mr. Francis.

Leave to bring in the bill was given by a majority of one*. Counsel were heard, and it was finally disposed of by a motion to discharge the order for a second reading†. The bill, which had been introduced, was also disposed of by a motion to defer the second reading for three months‡.

May 4th.

27th.

Several debates arose on the receiving petitions; one from Nottingham averred that the country was amused with the name of a representation of the people, when the reality was gone; that the right of election had passed away from the people almost altogether; and their confidence in Parliament was consequently weakened, if not destroyed. Mr. Pitt objected to the receiving of a petition expressed in terms so disrespectful, as inconsistent with propriety, or the dignity of the House. Mr. Fox, Mr. Grey, Mr. Sheridan, and several other members, if they could not absolutely

Feb. 21st.
Nottingham
petition for
reform.

Mr. Pitt.

Mr. Fox and
other
members.

* 19 to 18.

† 53 to 27.

‡ 41 to 33—Journals vol. xlviii. p. 806.

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Mr. Burke.

defend the words of the petition, deprecated its rejection, and spoke of some, received on former occasions, couched in terms not more respectful. Mr. Burke observed that if the House suffered themselves to be thus insulted, they would soon be overpowered by a torrent of insolence, and despised by the whole community. During Lord George Gordon's turbulence, the House had received as bad a petition; but what was suffered at such a time could not be regarded as an example. On a division, the House refused to receive it*. Another was afterward presented from the same town, in an unexceptionable form.

May 6th.

May 2nd.
Sheffield
petition.

A petition from Sheffield, containing matter still more scornful and insulting, began by asserting that the House was not, in the just sense of the words, what the petitions were from form, obliged to term it—'The Commons of Great Britain in Parliament assembled;' not being freely elected by a majority of the whole, but by a very small portion of the people; and that from the partial manner in which members were delegated, and their long continuance in Parliament, they were not the real, fair, and independent representatives of the whole people of Great Britain. The petitioners were in general tradesmen and artificers, unpossessed of freehold land; but still they were men, and they thought men the objects of representation, and not the land of a freeholder, or the houses of a borough-monger. Mr. Duncombe, who presented this petition, acknowledged that he did not approve of its language, but when Mr. Ryder objected to its being brought up, Mr. Francis, Mr. Lambton, Mr. Fox, and Mr. Whitbread supported it. They endeavoured to goad their opponents into the selection of some particular phrase which they impugned, and spoke largely of expressions formerly used by the Duke of Richmond, Mr. Pitt, and other statesmen on the same subject. This petition was also rejected*.

Debated.

Rejected.

May 6th.
Norwich
petition.

On the day when the grand contest was to be maintained, a petition from Norwich, said to be signed by

three-thousand seven hundred inhabitants, was offered by Mr. Hobart, but withdrawn, as being produced contrary to an order of the House made in 1656.

A long petition, signed by the members of the Society called Friends of the People, was then read. It was drawn with a great shew of precision, and comprised specifically and in argument, all the grounds on which were rested the objections to the present representation. It began by describing the functions of the King and the Lords, and the introduction of a third estate, distinct from, and a check upon, the other two; created by, representing, and responsible to, the people themselves. If the House were determined that the people ought not to be fully represented, it was prayed that such determination might be made known, and the people apprized of their real situation; but if the House should conceive that they were fully represented, then they begged attention to the following facts. The number of representatives assigned to the different counties was grossly disproportioned to their comparative extent, population, and trade; the elective franchise was so partially and unequally distributed, and in so many instances committed to bodies of men of such very limited numbers, that the majority of the House was returned by less than fifteen thousand electors, which, if the male adults in the kingdom were estimated only at three millions, was not more than the two hundredth part of them. The right of voting was regulated by no uniform or rational principle, and the exercise of the franchise was only renewed once in seven years; seventy members were returned by thirty-five places, where the right of voting is vested in burghage and other tenures, and the elections notoriously a mere matter of form; ninety were elected by forty-six places, in none of which the number of voters exceeded fifty; thirty-seven by nineteen places, where the greatest number was not more than one hundred; fifty-two by twenty-six places, no one containing more than two hundred; twenty more, for counties in Scotland, by less than one hundred each, and ten for other counties, in the same part of the kingdom having less than

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Petition of the
Friends of the
People.

two hundred and fifty each ; thirteen districts of burghs not containing one hundred and twenty-five each, returning fifteen more. And in this manner, two hundred and ninety-four members were chosen, and, being a majority of the entire House, were enabled to decide all questions in the name of the whole people of England and Scotland.

Their third complaint arose out of the complicated rights of voting, and the consequent expense and delay occasioned by the duration of polls and the proceedings before committees. They complained, too, of the want of an uniform and equitable principle in regulating the right of suffrage, and the arbitrary manner in which some were excluded ; papists generally ; protestant dissenters in corporate towns ; copyholders in counties, and persons who paid taxes but did not reside.

Having recapitulated these objections, and added some others, the petitioners proceeded to state, as the effect of this unsatisfactory representation, the increase of debt and annual expense from the time of the revolution, and prayed that the House would take measures to remove the evils arising from the unequal representation ; to correct the partial distribution of the elective franchise ; to regulate the right of voting upon an uniform and equitable principle ; and, finally, to shorten the duration of Parliaments, and, by removing the causes of that confusion, litigation, and expense, with which they were conducted, to render frequent and new elections what our ancestors at the revolution asserted them to be, the means of a happy union and good agreement between the King and the people.

Mr. Burke.

This petition, or manifesto, in which terms of extreme contumely were feebly disguised by a flimsy veil of irony, having been read, Mr. Burke inquired from whence it came ; as no place of residence was assigned to these petitioners.

Mr. Grey answered, that such a circumstance was not uncommon ; but that all the subscribers resided in or near London. It contained an accurate, full, and

precise detail of facts, which those who advanced them were ready to prove. He came forward, actuated solely by a sense of duty, to make a serious and important motion, which involved no less a consideration than a fundamental change of the government. He was aware of the use which would be made of the never-failing argument as to the danger of the times. If our situation happened to be prosperous, it was asked whether we could be more than happy, or more than free? In the season of adversity, on the other hand, all reform or innovation was deprecated, from the pretended risk of increasing the evil and pressure of our situation. He recapitulated the many attempts at reform which had been made, from Mr. Bromley's motion in 1733 for the repeal of the Septennial act, to that of Mr. Flood in 1790, and adverted particularly to the share which Mr. Pitt had taken in some of those discussions. Had a reform in the representation taken place on the conclusion of peace in 1763, this country had, in all likelihood, escaped the American war. If it had taken place last year, it would probably have saved us from our present commercial distresses. At a time when it had become customary to charge with bad views all those who talked of any species of alteration, he thought it right to state that he had the support of very great and high authorities—of Locke, Blackstone, Sir George Savile, the Earl of Chatham, the present Master of the Rolls, Chief Baron, Chief Justice of the King's Bench, Mr. Pitt himself, and the Duke of Richmond. Even his Majesty had been advised, in his speech from the throne, on the 24th of May, 1784, to say, that he would be always desirous to concur with his Parliament in supporting and maintaining, in their just balance, the rights and privileges of every branch of the legislature.

Although he would not follow the petition through the detail of facts, he treated on the absurd inequality of a system in which the county of Cornwall returned almost as many members as the kingdom of Scotland, on the patronage of peers, which was a violation of the constitution. After some general observations and a

poetical quotation from Sir William Jones, he concluded by affirming that the certain and effectual remedy for bribery and corruption was to establish a more popular election, which could secure purity in the electors and independence of members, and by moving that the petitions should be referred to a committee; and was seconded by Mr. Erskine.

Mr. Jenkinson.

Mr. Jenkinson observed that the time chosen for the introduction of this motion was when our constitution had been threatened from within, and war declared against it from without. The mode was still more extraordinary: without any complaint on the part of the people, a number of gentlemen associated themselves for the purpose of persuading them that they felt grievances, of which they appeared not even to have dreamed. The effects of government on a people, he said, do not so much depend on general principles and general theories, as on little accidental circumstances, which are frequently not even perceptible; and, consequently, if plausible theories ought never to be an objection to reform, when practical grievances were felt; so defective theories ought not to be a ground for it, when there was no practical grievance, but every practical advantage. In the present case, three questions would arise:—First, what is the House of Commons? Second, how ought it to be composed to answer its object? Third, what is the way of so composing it? On the first, all must agree that it was meant to be a legislative body, representing all descriptions of men in this country; as to the second, that the landed interest ought to have the preponderant weight. There were other descriptions, which he should style professional people, and whom he considered as absolutely necessary to its composition. He did not apply that expression in the usual narrow and confined sense, but meant those members who wished to raise themselves to the great offices of the state; those who were in the army, the navy, and the law: and he maintained that these several descriptions of persons ought to be able to find means of entering into Parliament. What then were the means of obtaining such a House of Commons?

The counties, and many of the populous boroughs, secured the election of country gentlemen; the commercial towns provided for the return of persons in that line; but how were those of the last description, the professional men, to obtain seats? If the names of those who had been returned for a considerable number of years were examined, it would be found that the far greater part had first come in by means of those which were termed rotten boroughs; that having, in general, no strong local connexion, and no very considerable property, it was scarcely possible that they should acquire seats by any other means; and if it was the object of the mover and of the petitioners, as it appeared to be, to abolish those close boroughs, persons of the description he had mentioned would scarcely ever find means of obtaining a seat; and those members whom he considered absolutely necessary for making that House the representative of the people, would be entirely excluded. Having laid down these principles, the honorable member argued them at considerable length, and with great ability.

Mr. Powys, on the same side, made severe observations on the preparation of the petition. The mover had come forward as the organ and delegate of a society constituted for the purpose of checking the progress of disaffection and discontent: of waiting for the operation of the public mind, and of holding no communication with visionary speculators. In process of time, however, these friends of the people joined with the performers of another theatre, and they had acted together at the Crown and Anchor tavern more than once. M. Condorcet, alluding to this society, had expressed a hope that it would produce the same symptoms in England as had preceded the convocation of the States-general of France.

Mr. Powys.

Mr. Windham said that there never had been offered to the House a question so repugnant to reason and to every rule of common sense. Two principles had been relied on, expediency and right, a discussion of which was better adapted to a select society of learned men, than to a large deliberative assembly.

Mr. Windham.

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To apply such metaphysical arguments as rules of conduct would be like turning a mill by the power of music, or like another Amphion, raising a wall by a tune. With much force, he analyzed both the propositions and the observations adduced in support of them, illustrating his argument with ancient learning, poetical quotation, and an application to modern times and recent events.

Mr. Erskine.

Mr. Erskine took the easier course of reminding Mr. Pitt of his own former motion, and quoting from Mr. Burke's "Thoughts on the Causes of the present Discontents." He stated the evil as disclosed in the petition, described the remedy as safe and easy; and as to the time at which the proposition was introduced, he contended that if ever there was one season more critically favourable than another to the object, it was at that very moment.

7th.
Adjourned
debate.

The debate, not without a division*, was adjourned to the following day, when Mr. Stanley, who had moved the delay, and Mr. Buxton, both professed to be friends of reform, yet declared themselves adverse to the present motion; Mr. Duncombe avowing his support of it, and Sir William Young and Sir William Milner opposing it altogether, made short speeches.

Mr. Francis.

Mr. Francis followed at much length, undertaking to refute Mr. Windham, acknowledging, however, that if he should appear to question his judgment, to combat his opinions, or to undervalue his eloquence, no man would suspect him of the folly of pretending to an equality. He described that gentleman as sometimes soaring high into the regions of air, with equal rapidity dropping down from heaven to earth, to the depths of the sea, and to the waters under the earth. He had ranged over the whole circuit of human science, and glided through every region of the moral as well the intellectual world; through ethics, mechanics, pneumatics, hydraulics, geography, mathematics, astronomy, and logic; through all the polite arts, of swimming, flying, burning, skating, diving; the learning of his library, and the meditations of his closet;

* 181 to 109.

but on one subject alone he had studiously maintained a most delicate reserve. The unfortunate motion on the table had never been blest with a single moment of his attention. He turned to the argument of Mr. Jenkinson, and, after intimating the effect of East Indian influence in the House, concluded by declaring, in a parody on Mr. Dunning's jingle, which he termed the solemnly adopted language of Parliament, his own opinion that corruption has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished.

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The Earl of Mornington, in a speech of great length, took an extended view of the subject. He examined the statements of the supporters of the motion, showing that, in history, statistics, commerce, and all the other subjects on which they had treated, they had been altogether in error. He contrasted their opposite declarations on modern subjects; dissected the petitions, both that of the society calling themselves "Friends of the People," and the others which had been presented, showing their remarkable uniformity in stating it as "an undisputed principle of the constitution, that the "third estate ought to be elected by the commons of "the kingdom, or by a majority thereof." He dwelt particularly on one which Mr. Francis himself presented from "sundry inhabitants of London, Westminster, and their vicinity," which set forth "that, "according to the established maxim of all good governments, every man ought to be, in some measure, "his own legislator;" and, in conclusion, recommended "as the only effectual, permanent, and practicable plan "of reform, that the right of voting should be restored "universally to every man, not incapacitated by nature "for want of reason, or by law for the commission of "crimes; and that elections should be annual." At the head of the signatures stood the name of Thomas Hardy, a name obscure in this country, but not unknown to the National Convention. In November, Thomas Hardy, as secretary to the Corresponding Society, subscribed an address to them, which breathed so sincere an affection for the cause of the French Republic, and so warm a zeal for the destruction of the

Lord Mornington.

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British government, as to obtain the honour of being circulated throughout all the departments, and all the armies of our enemy. He noticed, also, the proceedings of societies in various parts of the kingdom, and their conformity with the opinions of the Corresponding Society, and proved the tendency of all their movements to overthrow the established government and substitute a republic.

This speech fixed the attention of all who heard it, and for a long time formed a topic of public discussion. All parties agreed that the young nobleman from whom it proceeded might be looked up to as one of the brightest hopes of the nation, a powerful pillar of the state.

Other mem-
bers.

The debate was continued with great ability and pertinacity; but the matter was exhausted, and the speakers could only reiterate the former topics, each applying such ornaments and embellishments as his learning or taste could supply.

Mr. Fox.

Mr. Whitbread followed the Earl of Mornington, and in supporting the motion he was aided by Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Fox; while, on the other side, opinions were delivered by Mr. Anstruther, Mr. Pitt, and Mr. Adam. The most striking passage in these speeches was that with which Mr. Fox concluded the debate. The objection to the time, he said, was a fallacy, a mere pretext for putting off what the House could not help seeing to be necessary, but felt unwilling to begin. The time must come when the House would be unable to disguise, even from themselves, the necessity of inquiring into the state of the representation; and then too, perhaps, they might give room for a new application of the poet Prior's raillery on an individual—

“ Let that be wrought which Mat doth say;
Yea, quoth the Erle, but not to-day.”

Motion nega-
tived.

31st.

Mr. Wharton's
motion.

The motion was rejected by a great majority*.

Mr. Wharton endeavoured to call back the attention of the House to the subject of reform, by moving for a committee to inquire whether any, and which of

the provisions made by Parliament in the reign of William and Mary, and of William the Third, for securing the responsible exercise of the executive authority, and for other purposes, had by any means been invalidated or done away; and to consider whether they could be re-enacted and restored, so that the people might recover the security in which they were placed by the glorious Revolution of 1688.

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His speech elicited no answer, and his motion was rejected*.

In closing the session, his Majesty acknowledged the wisdom and public spirit shown by the two Houses, and said that the rapid and signal successes which, in an early period of the campaign, had attended the operations of the combined armies; the respectable and powerful force which Parliament had enabled him to employ by sea and land, and the measures which he had concerted with other powers for the effectual prosecution of the war, afforded the best prospect of a happy issue to the contest in which they were engaged. "It is only," his Majesty said, "by perseverance in vigorous exertions, and by endeavouring to improve the advantages already acquired, that we can hope to obtain the great end to which my views are uniformly directed, the restoration of peace on such terms as may be consistent with our permanent security, and with the general tranquillity of Europe."

June 21st.
Close of the
session.

* 71 to 11.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTY-THIRD.

1793.

Effect of the defection of Dumouriez.—Conflict between the Brissotines and the Mountain.—Revolutionary Tribunal.—Accusation and acquittal of Marat—Decline—Progress of the struggle—defeat and flight of some of the Brissotines, and arrest of others—submission of the Convention—twenty-one members arrested—seventy-three expelled—committees of public and general safety.—Profuse issue of assignats.—Scarcity—plunder.—Laws on assignats and money—maximum.—Commissioners to the departments.—Military efforts—the republic declared one and indivisible.—War in La Vendée.—Insurrection at Lyons.—The armies.—Commissioners.—British force under the Duke of York.—Arrangements made with Dumouriez.—Congress at Antwerp.—Proclamation of the Prince of Cobourg—altered plans—new proclamation.—Dilatory proceedings of the allies—correspondence with the commissioners.—Condé blockaded.—Arrival of the British troops—their improved condition.—Battle of St. Amand.—Difference of opinion among the allies.—Attack on the camp of Famars—siege of Valenciennes—capture of Condé—the French take Furnes—action at Werwick—sieges of Mayence and Landau—surrender of Mayence.—Custine arrested.—Observations on the conduct of the allies.—War of the French against Spain.—War in Piedmont—attack on Cagliari—war in La Vendée—Toulon.—Tyranny of the Jacobins.—Negociations with Lord Hood—his proclamations—the people refuse the republican constitution.—Siege of Dunkirk.—Proceedings in the Convention—new constitution decreed and suspended—government of the committees—reign of terror—Revolu-

tionary Tribunal—proceedings of the Brissotines—Charlotte Corday murders Marat.—Petitions against Brissot and his party—twenty-one are tried and executed—other executions.—Horrible treatment of the Royal Family—Louis XVII separated from his mother—the Queen removed to the Conciergerie—her trial—and murder.—The tombs of kings destroyed.—Proceedings against the Duke of Orléans—Madame du Barry.—Efforts against religion—desecration of churches—laws on marriage—republican calendar—conduct of the clergy—death declared to be an eternal sleep.—Priests renounce their orders—general apostacy—Goddess of Reason worshipped.—Energetic spirit displayed—telegraph—military requisition.—Siege of Dunkirk—battle of Lincelles—progress of the siege—battle of Hondschote—the British troops retreat—surrender of Quesnoy—effect of these events.—Inactivity of the Prussians—disagreement of the Austrians and Prussians—Success of the French in the Vosges—they fail at Permasens—negotiations.—Departure of the King of Prussia.—Defeat of the French at Lauterbourg—and Weissenbourg.—Haguenau taken.—Discordant views of the allies.—siege of Maubeuge raised—siege of Neuport raised—various other actions—the armies retire into winter quarters.—Army of the Moselle—Strasbourg.—Wurmser takes Fort Louis.—Views of the Emperor on Alsace—distasteful to Prussia.—Retreat of the Duke of Brunswick.—Battles at Kaiserslautern—Hoche's victory at Freschweiler—Austrians retreat.—Campaign in the Eastern Pyrenees.—War in Sardinia.—War in La Vendée—Expedition under Lord Moira.—Defeat of the insurgents at Mans—barbarity of the victors—Marseilles—Lyons—Toulon besieged—Ollioules taken.—Arrival of General O'Hara—and of Napoleon Bonaparte.—Invitation to Monsieur—Correspondence with the British Commissioners—declaration of the English government.—Progress of the besiegers—Toulon evacuated—burning of the fleet and arsenal.—Grand fete in Paris.—Cruel executions at Toulon.

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LXXXIII.

1793.

Effect of the
defection of
Dumouriez.

IN France, the defection of Dumouriez produced the effects which were to be expected. As a calamity, it was unfelt. No strong place had been surrendered, no great portion of the army had been seduced; but, on the contrary, a firm determination to support the government, and even, if possible, to sacrifice their commander, had been displayed, nor could much injury result from the detention of seven commissioners, whose absence from the public offices or from the Convention would hardly be perceived, and never noticed but to give force to a languid period, or excite convenient rage. The loss was limited, therefore, to fifteen or sixteen hundred troops, a few officers, who had not attained any great public estimation, and a leader whose political character and military successes, however distinguished and important, had procured for him neither the respect nor the confidence of his countrymen. His situation in command was filled by General Dampierre, and it certainly appears extraordinary that, during the pause of irresolution which preceded his defection, or in the period of uncertainty and confusion which immediately ensued, the Prince of Cobourg made no movement which could advance his own cause or affect that of the enemy: but this appearance may be explained*. To the Jacobins and their opponents, generally called Brissotines, Dumouriez had long formed the subject of vehement discussions; the one insisting, even in the midst of his best services and most conspicuous successes, that he was a traitor to the country, an aristocrat, and a royalist, wishing to erect a regal power, if not on Louis, on the Duke of Orléans. As his purposes became more evident, each party cast on the other the charge of favouring his plans, and hoping to make him and his army subservient to their views†.

The differences between the two factions had now assumed a character which made it evident that the destruction of one or the other must take place. Sup-

Conflict between the Brissotines and the Mountain.

* Lacrételle, tome x. p. 309. Victoires et Conquêtes, tome i. p. 143.

† Debates, as reported in the *Moniteur*, particularly from the 28th March to the 5th of April.

ported by the clubs and the mob in Paris, professing no principles of justice or humanity, except as such professions could favour their views for the moment, apologists of plunder and accomplices in murder, the Jacobins had great advantages over their antagonists, who, if they did not eschew crime, affected to revere virtue, and endeavoured to cover the odious colours of guilt by external pretences of integrity and purity. In the general and popular sense of the term, the patriotism of neither party was justly to be suspected; both wished to see their country triumphant over its enemies, and even sufficiently formidable to enslave and plunder the rest of the world; but they differed in their notions of internal government; the Brissotines desiring a quiet, compact system, in which all power should centre in and emanate from them; while the Jacobins, equally desirous of power, aimed to establish their tyranny by continual appeals to the force of the people, or rather the impulse of mobs, and the destruction of every order, and even of every individual, who rose above them in rank or talent, who obstructed their views, or exposed their measures. The wavering and inconsistent conduct of the Girondists*, on the trial of the King, afforded to the opposing faction many advantages; and the wire-drawn tenuity of their systems, contrasted with the gross depravity of their political conduct, gave abundant topics for exposing them to ridicule, censure, or abhorrence. Perhaps the faction of Brissot was more extensively popular in the departments than that of its adversaries; but these, having a complete guidance of the mob in Paris, a decided superiority in the clubs, and a formidable minority in the Convention, were always in sufficient force to give alarm, and to hope for ultimate triumph. Their exertions were uniform in object and manner, while the efforts of the Brissotines were divided according to personal circumstances, and enfeebled by particular feelings, or by the lassitude, indolence, or timidity of individuals. Their intrigues were easily detected and

* The words Girondist and Brissotine are used indifferently, being perfectly synonymous.

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exposed; and their best contrivances for augmenting their influence in the departments counteracted, or made to recoil on themselves. In the legislature itself, the eloquence of Vergniaud, the logic of Guadet, and the political experience of Brissot, were overpowered by the plausibility of Barrère, the sophistry of Robespierre, the vulgarity of Marat, and the vociferation of Danton. The people in the tribunes or galleries, mixing their expressions of approbation or disgust with the speeches of the members, assured the preponderance of those who gratified, or, probably, retained them.

To follow with perspicuous exactness the course of the conflict which took place, would display matter of great curiosity, and considerable interest in the history of faction; but it is not sufficiently connected with the objects of this narrative to permit a minute detail: an abstract or general view must suffice.

Brissot, rash, vain, and implacable, hastened the decisive contest of the parties, without sufficiently advertent to the circumstances which would have made it prudent to evade an instant concussion, and, by procrastination, afford time for the views of Robespierre and his adherents to unfold themselves. The declining credit of the Duke of Orléans, and the known connexion between him and some leading members of the Brissotine party, afforded a great triumph to their opponents. Sillery, Buzot, and even Brissot himself, were known to have been in his pay, or to have held offices of responsibility under him. A plot or conspiracy was formed, shortly after the murder of the King; and, after several delays, a night was fixed for its execution; but its nature, limits, and precise objects, are among the inscrutable mysteries of the revolution. It had some tendency to the advantage of the Duke of Orléans; but each party cast on the other the opprobrium attached to the undivulged crime*. The Brissotines obtained the appointment of a committee of twelve members to inquire into the causes of the projected insurrection. This was a subject of

10th March.
Plot against
the Brissotines

Committee.

* Louvet, *Recit. de mes Perils*, p. 25. Thiers, tome iv. p. 67—70.

constant complaint, and of numerous petitions from the adherents of the Mountain, and produced some of the most violent debates in the Convention. Danton, on the other hand, obtained the establishment of a court, from its origin highly popular, and in its duration horribly celebrated; called, at first, the Extraordinary Criminal Tribunal, and afterward the Revolutionary Tribunal; where six judges, a public accuser with two deputies, twelve permanent, salaried jurymen with three substitutes, all elected by the Convention, sat for the trial "of plots and attempts against the liberty, unity, indivisibility, internal or external safety, of the republic, and every plan tending to re-establish royalty;" and from their decision there was no appeal. This court was entirely formed of nominees of the Mountain, and maintained its popularity by a devoted subserviency to the views of that party. Decrees were soon framed which shewed some of the purposes for which it was formed. Deputies were to be tried; inviolability was annulled: extended powers were afterward conferred, sufficient to render it the scourge and the stigma of the country.

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LXXXIII.

1793.
Revolutionary
Tribunal.

April.

In the violent debate which took place on reading the letters of the commissioners who had been sent to examine the facts relative to Dumouriez, Danton declared that no further truce was to be hoped for between the Mountain and their opponents, the patriots and enemies of the country; and Marat did not hesitate to assert that three hundred heads of the Girondists must be sacrificed to liberty and equality. Pétion, on behalf of his friends, complained of these violences in vain; his unsuccessful attempt was a prelude to a more formidable denunciation against the whole party by Robespierre, who, in a speech of great ability, traced the history of their intrigues, demonstrating their ambition, greediness, and avarice; accusing them of occasioning the war for factious and selfish purposes, and inferring that, in conjunction with Dumouriez, and in alliance with cabinets of the hostile countries, they were plotting the ruin of France. This inference, although not supported by fact, was argued

Violent denun-
ciations of the
Brissoines.

9th April.

Conflict of the
parties.

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LXXXIII.

1793.

12th.

Accusation of
Marat.

15th.

24th.
His acquittal
and triumph.Decline of the
Brissotines.

with great ingenuity ; and the inconsistencies of Brissot furnished abundant theme for making any deductions plausible. Vergniaud and Guadet made eloquent answers to Robespierre ; and several members spoke in the debate, which continued three days. Marat, in particular, was conspicuous for his unrestrained virulence, and his insolence in persisting to place himself in the tribune, in defiance of the exertions of the President to maintain order. Guadet obtained a decree for bringing Marat to trial before the Revolutionary Tribunal, for having signed, as president of the Jacobin club, an inflammatory circular address ; but the cause of the incendiary was vehemently espoused by his adherents ; he did not feel even the temporary inconvenience of confinement, being suffered by his gaoler to escape, and assured, from the authority of his judges themselves, that his life was in no danger. The sections of Paris not only espoused his cause, but, with more than usual boldness, petitioned the Convention for the expulsion of twenty-two members, comprising Brissot and the chiefs of his party. His trial was a triumph ; no attempt was made to gain a verdict against him ; and the moment the jury pronounced him not guilty, he was carried in victorious procession to the Convention, reinstated amid universal plaudits, and complimented by Danton, who pronounced this one of the beautiful days of the revolution.

For some time the Brissotines maintained this unequal conflict, with evident loss of credit : plots, discoveries, addresses, petitions, denunciations, and recriminations, were daily brought forward ; and they seemed amazed and terrified at seeing the artillery they had used against the King so successfully turned against themselves. Their panic prevented them from adopting vigorous, or even reasonable, measures : bold, and even extravagant, speeches were followed by timid votes, or feeble motions : they talked of convoking the people in primary assemblies, of removing the sittings of the Convention to Versailles : one of their adherents resigned his seat ; and all the party, instead of

meeting the crisis with boldness and confidence, pursued a mean system of placing spies to watch their opponents, hiring an armed guard from Marseilles, and changing their lodgings for fear of being assassinated.

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The scandalous scenes of contention which were daily renewed, converted, according to the expression of Brissot, the hall of the legislature into an arena, and its avenues into ambuscades; and, as a last effort to restore the affairs of his party, he published his celebrated address to his constituents; a work which, in almost every passage intended to criminate the author's adversaries, exposes to detestation some principle or act of his own faction*: it did no service to his cause, but was answered with great wit and pleasantry by Camille Desmoulins.

22nd.

As a last hope, the Brissotines looked to the report of the committee of twelve: perhaps too, it was anticipated with some apprehension by their adversaries; for several petitions were presented, praying for the abolition of the committee. Before the day when the report was to be presented, Santerre had been removed, and the command of the national guard conferred on Henriot, a conspicuous actor in the massacres of September, and a devoted adherent of the Mountain; the Brissotines obtained the arrest of Hébert, the attorney-general of the Commune, and one of their most inveterate opponents; but this exertion of authority tended as little to their advantage as the proceeding against Marat. The council of the Commune, and a central committee formed of its most desperate members, were always sitting; the Brissotines pretended to have discovered a plot for assassinating twenty-two of them; but their complaints inspired no sensation which could compensate for the effect of a bombastic boast, by Isnard, that if the sections violated the dignity of national representation, by violence against himself or his friends, Paris should be annihilated, and the traveller on the banks of the Seine should lose his time in fruitless inquiries for the place where the city had

Progress of
the struggle.

May 17.

* It was translated into English, with an admirable preface.

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May 31st.
Defeat of the
Brissotines.

stood. This blustering phrase was bitterly remembered in subsequent proceedings.

At length the crisis came. The council general of the Commune received from the commissioners of the sections unlimited powers to act for the public good. The tocsin was sounded, the commandant of the national guard changed, the générale beat, and the alarm guns fired. The Jacobin members appeared in the Convention with countenances portentously scowling, with daggers at their sides, and pistols at their girdles. If derision could be properly indulged on such an occasion, it must be excited by the wretched conduct of the Brissotines, who had pretended to god-like virtues, and grasped at the full exercise of human power, but who now, appalled and trembling at the aspect of their adversaries, came abashed and timid into the hall, or sought safety in flight.

June 1st and
2nd.
The Convention
overawed.

Flight of some
and arrest of
others.

Gaining confidence from this irresolution, the Jacobins and the Commune overawed and vanquished the Convention. Petitions were presented by bodies so numerous, that they had the effect of commands; the hall was surrounded by an armed force under Henriot, who refused to attend at the bar when summoned, and, with cannon pointed toward the building, forbade the egress of the members. Roland escaped from Paris; but his wife and the minister Le Brun were arrested without any legal authority, and committed to the Abbaye. Clavière was also arrested; and other chiefs of the party resolved, but too late, to fly from the capital, that, by uniting at Bordeaux, or in Calvados, they might "save the country by exciting an insurrection in the departments*."

Submission of
the Convention.

Twenty-one
members
arrested.

After undergoing every possible humiliation, and practising every possible shift to disguise their disgrace, the Convention were obliged to sanction the arrests which had already taken place, and to decree a similar measure against twenty-one of their own members, including Gensonné, Vergniaud, Brissot, Guadet, and Rabaut. They were not ordered to prison, but to be

* See Louvet's Narrative; Appel à l'impartiale Postérité; and Debates.

in a state of arrest at their own abodes; the Commune offering to give an equal number of their members as hostages to the departments; this point being obtained, the insurrection was ended. Some of the deputies who were placed under arrest having made their escape, and many others having fled to raise insurrections in the departments, those who still remained, or could be secured, were taken into close custody. Brissot had attempted to leave the kingdom with a false passport, but he was arrested and confined with the others; and seventy-three members, who subscribed a protest against the proceedings of the day, were deprived of their seats and imprisoned*.

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Seventy-three
members
expelled.

Amidst all these struggles of faction, the cares of the Convention were directed to many important general objects. The powers of government were confided to twenty-five individuals, forming one committee, soon afterwards divided into two, under the names of the Committee of Public Safety and of General Safety. Famine and pecuniary distress overspread the country. The emission of assignats, easily made and incapable of being restrained, had long and largely exceeded the amount of confiscated property on which they were supposed to be secured, and yet new floods of them, however discredited, continued to issue. Famine, on the other hand, was the subject of daily complaints, which, if exaggerated, were not unfounded; and of riots, violences, and plunder, which were often censured, but never adequately restrained. By a decree of the Convention, the amount of assignats allowed to be created was limited to three thousand one hundred millions of livres (£129,000,000); it was declared that already had that sum been issued; but still a decree was made for the making of two hundred millions (£8,000,000) more; and it could not be disguised that

Other acts of
the Conven-
tion.
March 25.

Committees of
public and
general safety.

Profuse issue
of assignats.

Scarcity.

Plunder.

Feb. 1.
Laws on as-
signats and
money.

May 7.

* See the Protest in Miss Williams's Letters, published 1795, vol. i. p. 259; Histoire de la Révolution, par deux Amis de la Liberté, vol. xiii; Lacrételle, tome x. p. 310; Thiers, tome iv. p. 107, et seqq.; and the histories of the period in general. See, also, La Vallée, Histoire des Factions, tome ii. p. 86. La Verité sur la Faction d'Orléans et la Conspiration du 10 Mars; Appel à l'impériale Postérité, par la Citoyenne Roland, part i. p. 5, et seqq.; and pamphlets by Edmé Petit, Lanjuinais, Isnard, and many others. Among the number so unseated and incarcerated was Thomas Paine.

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April 11.

May 20.

Sept. 3.
Maximum.

May 4.

so long as the engraved plates existed*, or could be renewed, the paper money would never cease to be produced. Those of the lower class, who possessed this worthless emblem of unreal wealth, compelled tradesmen to receive it by threats and violence; those who had money, concealed it, or reluctantly parted with it on most unequal terms. To appease present clamour, a law was framed to punish with six years' imprisonment in chains those who should thus traffick in money; and a forced loan of a thousand millions (£41,333,333) was decreed, to which the rich alone were to contribute. Before the end of half a year, this absurd distinction was repealed. It was rashly and ignorantly imagined that a scarcity could be prevented by a law, fixing a maximum, or highest allowable sum, to be demanded for necessaries of life. Some delay arising in the discussion of the project, Marat, in his journal, exhorted the people to arise and plunder the grocers, whom he termed monopolisers; the advice was followed, and nearly every grocer in Paris saw, in one day, his property seized upon, and probably felt happy that the concluding part of Marat's sentence, that they should be hung at their own doors, was not executed†. Such was the depressed and degraded state of the public mind, that a violence like this was perpetrated by an assembly, not formidable in numbers, but unopposed by any authority, military or civil, and unresisted even by an union of its intended victims. The law passed, and by a subsequent explanatory decree was declared

* On this subject, a well-informed and judicious American writer says, "In one shape or another this nation will make a bankruptcy. The mode now talked of, is to pay off the debt in a species of paper-money, which shall be receivable for the sales of confiscated property, and which shall bear no interest. When once the whole of the debt shall be fairly afloat, the single word depreciation will settle all accounts. You will say, perhaps, that this measure is unjust; but to this I answer, that in popular governments, strongly convulsed, it is a sufficient answer to all arguments, that the measure proposed is for the public good. Supposing, then, the debt of France thus liquidated, she presents a rich surface covered with above twenty millions of people, who love war better than labour. Be the form of government what it may, the administration will find war abroad necessary to preserve peace at home. The neighbours of France must therefore consider her as a great power, essentially belligerent, and they must measure themselves by the scale of her force."—Gouverneur Morris's Letter to Thomas Jefferson, 13th Feb. 1790. Sparkes's Life, vol. ii. p. 278

† La Vallée, tome ii. p. 90.

applicable to all articles in general use for food or fire, raw materials of manufacture, common metals, woollen and linen stuffs, tobacco, and shoes, both of leather and wood. Monopolising was also prohibited under pain of death.

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Sept. 29.

In the history of a regular government, such circumstances, financial and political, would be considered as indicating irreparable weakness, and the annihilation of all power : on these consequences the adversaries of France relied with a confidence fatal to their interests and destructive of their combined exertions. Reasoning which would apply with irresistible force to a regular, were utterly fallacious with regard to a revolutionary, government. Without credit, they could obtain all that other countries derived from the best-regulated systems ; without lawful power, they could enforce unhesitating obedience ; and, without military means of any kind, they could create, equip, and animate, immense armies. The publication of worthless assignats gave them all the effects of a solvent and well-regulated exchequer ; a law of requisition placed at their disposal all arms in the possession of individuals, and all materials from which they could be made ; while decrees for raising recruits and augmenting levies, aided, from time to time, by severe laws and cruel executions, the difficulty of finding subsistence by means of civil pursuits, and the excitement of example and persuasion, placed almost all the disposable youth of France at the command of the Convention. Probably, too, another miscalculation misled the allies ; they expected that attachment to the large body of nobles and priests who had been plundered, and in effect banished, by the republicans, resentment for the murder of their sovereign, and indignation at the injuries and insults still daily accumulated on his unfortunate family, would have produced disobedience at least, if not resistance. But the ardent genius of the French nation did not permit the operation of such sentiments when a foreign enemy was invading their territory, and when, not without appearance of truth, from many acts and circumstances, they were taught

Unexpected
effect of these
measures.

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Tyrannical
operations of
government.

to apprehend that, while they aspired at the subjugation of other countries and the extension of their rule and sway, a spoliation and partition of their own land was intended by the invaders.

The firmness and activity of the Convention were well calculated to excite and to maintain the national spirit. What was extreme or exaggerated in their decrees, or tyrannical in their conduct, found its apology in the danger of the country, and, under pretence of securing the public safety, they were enabled to carry into effect the wildest schemes of plunder, and to destroy all liberty of speech or of conduct. They sent into every department commissioners selected from their own body, to instruct their constituents on the new dangers with which they were threatened, and to raise forces to repel the enemy. They were authorised to take all such measures as they should consider necessary for the instant completion of the contingents, and, in case of need, to put into requisition all persons able to bear arms. From those who could not serve in the field, they were authorised to take their arms, habiliments, and equipments of war, horses and mules not used in husbandry, and all other things relating to the furnishment of armies, for which the sufferers were to be indemnified, at a price fixed by the commissioners or a valuer appointed by the council general of the administrative authorities. Wherever public order was disturbed, the commissioners were empowered to suspend from their functions and imprison all whom they should find to be suspected; and, in aid of their operations, to call in the armed force.

March.
Commissioners
sent to the
departments.

Military efforts
March 2.
24th—29th.

To show a bold defiance of foreign power, the Convention ordered a levy of three hundred thousand additional troops, and housekeepers were ordered to exhibit on the front of their dwellings correct lists of all their inmates. To these rigorous decrees some puerilities were added; but all the proceedings showed activity, earnestness, and constancy of purpose.

30th.

May 10.
The Republic
declared one
and indivisible

One decree, of the utmost importance and the highest character, was that which, as a basis of a new constitution, declared the French Republic to be one

and indivisible. Its effect was to render, not only the ancient possessions of France, domestic and colonial, but those which had been, by the consent of the people or without it, annexed to their dominion, inseparable from it; and it had the further effect of solemnly repudiating a project entertained by some members of the Convention, of dividing France into several republics, connected by a federal union, after the manner of the States of America. The expelled and fugitive Brissotines carried their system into the provinces, and endeavoured to collect a force sufficient to enforce it on the Convention*. Their hopes were encouraged by a formidable insurrection in another quarter, which, although not formed upon their principles, might have aided their endeavours, so far at least, as related to the overthrow of the dominating faction in Paris.

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February 28.

La Vendée, as it was called in the modern division of France, comprising part of the ancient Poitou, was inhabited by a brave, loyal, and religious population. The scenes of republican violence, the expulsion of priests, the desecration of holy edifices, and the murder of the King, had filled them with grief and indignation, and prepared them for resistance to a power which they detested. The enforcement of the new decree for a levy of three hundred thousand men occasioned their first display of armed hostility. Two separate parties, unconnected with each other, unprovided with arms, and unacquainted with discipline, headed only by peasants and men of humble station, surprised posts, vanquished military companies, seized artillery, and captured towns. Men of rank and military knowledge were soon invited to command them; their strength increased, their successes multiplied, and the Convention owned, with terror, that the insurrection was not only a thorn in their sides, but the cause of an important defalcation from their general means of warlike operation†.

War in La
Vendée.

* Victoires et Conquêtes, tome i. p. 195.

† Memoirs of the Marchioness de Larochejaquelin, p. 36 to 91; Lacrételle, tom. ii. p. 2 to 25; Victoires et Conquêtes, tom. i. pp. 106, 107, 108, 125, 129; La Vallée, tom. i. p. 78.

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1793.
February.
Insurrection at
Lyons.

May 29.

May 25th.

The armies.
April 9.
Commis-
sioners.

British force
under the
Duke of York.

Another embarrassment arose from the state of Lyons, the second city in France for splendour and population, and the first in industry, commerce, and wealth. The proud and independent inhabitants of that city were indignant at the usurpation and insolence of the lowest of the people, assembled under the name of Jacobins, and headed by one Chalier, bred a monk, a monster of impiety and cruelty, who accused Bazire and Legendre of pusillanimous moderation, and aspired to the title of the Marat of the South. Wearied with oppressions and menaces, and threatened with a general massacre, the sections assembled in arms, notwithstanding the prohibition of the commissioners from the Convention, fought and routed the Jacobins, executed Chalier and one of his most ferocious adherents, and prepared to defend their city against any attack*.

The military force of the republic was divided into ten armies, and to each of them were sent three commissioners from the Convention, one of whom was to be exchanged every month; they were to exercise the most active vigilance over the operations of the executive council, the conduct of generals, officers, and soldiers, and to superintend the supply of stores, and the infliction of punishments; they were empowered to take such measures as they should think fit for reorganizing the army, and were invested with unlimited powers; to employ as many subordinates as they considered necessary, and all civil and military agents were to obey their requisition, reserving only a right of appeal. Such were the powers, equally destructive of civil liberty and due military authority, which were created in consequence of the defection of Dumouriez.

In aid of the general operations against France, ten thousand English troops were destined to act, under the command of his royal highness the Duke of York; who, before their arrival, proceeded to concert measures with the allies. Some circumstances attending their last transactions with the French general, rendered their situation peculiar, and

* Lacrételle, tom. ii. p. 85; Victoires et Conquêtes, tom. i p. 155.

their choice of conduct difficult. When Dumouriez, supposing he could rely on the attachment of his troops, contemplated a march to Paris, he obtained a conference at Ath with Colonel Mack, at which General Thouvenot, the Duke de Chartres, and Colonel Montjoye were present. It was agreed that, for a certain period, the French army should remain undisturbed in its position at Mons, Tournay, and Courtray; and if the plan of the French General had succeeded, he was to direct the operations of his own troops, and, acting merely as auxiliaries, the Imperialists were to remain on the frontier, and not to move forward: the entire evacuation of the Belgic provinces by the French formed a part of the agreement. If, contrary to his expectation, Dumouriez could neither effect a counter-revolution, nor restore the monarchy according to the Constitution of 1791 alone, a limited number of the Imperial troops, to be determined by himself, was to march to his assistance.

To further the plans of this alliance, a congress was appointed at Antwerp, and was opened, according to the exigency of the time, with some appearance of precipitation. The Stadtholder, the hereditary Prince of Orange, and the Duke of York, Prince Cobourg, and Colonel Mack, declared their intention to be present; and Lord Auckland, Count Stahremberg, and Count de Keller, ministers of the Emperor and King of Prussia, Count Metternich, General Knobelsdorff, and Count Taubentzein, met in consultation. It was at this congress that Lord Auckland and Count Stahremberg delivered the note which, as already has been mentioned, caused so much debate in the British Parliament.

At the time when this state paper was issued, no doubt was entertained by the allies that the speedy ruin of the Convention was inevitable. Dumouriez, who, from the conduct of his troops on the preceding day, had abundant reason to suspect the contrary, concealed his well-founded apprehensions, and in a nocturnal interview which he obtained with Mack, prepared, and induced him to forward to the Prince of Cobourg,

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Arrangements
made with
Dumouriez.

March 27.

Congress at
Antwerp.
April 25.

Fourth Procla-
mation of the
Prince of Co-
bourg.

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an address to the French nation, which was issued on the following day. It declared the unanimous wish of the allied sovereigns to terminate the anarchy and the calamities which afflicted the French nation, by procuring to them the blessing of a constitution and of a wise and solid government. The Prince declared that, with all the forces entrusted to him, he would support the generous and benevolent intentions of Dumouriez and his brave army, and that he would, if that commander so required, cause a portion, or even the whole, of his forces to co-operate with the French, like friends and companions in arms, in restoring the King and the constitution which France had given herself, subject to amendment, if the nation should think it necessary, and thus afford to them, as they were enjoyed by the rest of Europe, peace, confidence, quiet, and happiness. The Prince also promised that, if any strong place were given up to his troops, it should never be considered but as a sacred deposit, and restored when required by a regular government in France, or by the brave general with whom the allies were making common cause.

The possible effect of this proclamation was never tried; for, before its contents could be promulgated, the general, rejected by his army, was reduced to the state of a proscribed fugitive. "Thus," an intelligent author observes, "ended the splendid dream of this "diplomatic warrior; of him who, late in January, "leaving Paris torn by factions, set out to conquer "Holland, to alter the political state of Belgium, and "to re-establish monarchy, in one campaign. Varying "his plan according to circumstances, he, for a moment, thought of raising himself to the Dukedom of "Brabant, under the protection of England, in order "to play in France, with greater safety and with more "brilliant effect than he could then throw around it, "the character of General Monk, establishing only a "constitutional monarchy. The loss of the battle of "Nerwinden deprived him of almost all his chances; "but still, with the aid of the imperial army, he might "have succeeded in the latter part of his plan, had

“ his conduct been more prompt and decisive. He himself observes that the conduct of his army, who, when fighting for liberty, seeing their general treating with the enemy, and thinking themselves betrayed, changed their former affection for hatred, was in itself laudable. And he observes, not without reason, that his truce with the Austrians saved the frontiers. Had they, instead of faithfully observing that compact, marched on the 5th of April upon the camps of Maulde and St. Amand, they might, in the midst of their disorder, have destroyed the army, and penetrated, without impediment, into the interior*.”

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For some days after the failure of Dumouriez, the allies appeared to have cherished delusive hopes from the proclamation ; but when the Congress of Antwerp was assembled, the truth appeared, and the delusion vanished. Prince Cobourg and Colonel Mack endeavoured in vain to justify, and recommended for continuance the system they had planned ; the decision of the French army shewed the project of a limited counter-revolution in all its absurdity ; under the urgent advice of Lord Auckland and Prince Metternich, a different system was resolved on, and the Prince of Cobourg, notwithstanding his repugnance to an avowal of his altered opinions, published a new proclamation, declaring that he revoked the propositions contained in that which had so lately preceded, and that the war which had existed between the court of Vienna and the coalesced powers, and France, must be from that date unhappily renewed.

Altered plans.

8th.

9th.
New
Proclamation.

Yet no proceeding marked by vigour or energy followed this declaration. No movement was made to overpower the dispersed portions of the adverse army ; on the contrary, they were permitted to unite, to receive reinforcements, and to occupy the forest of Mormale, a position of great importance, as it covered Quesnoy and Avesne. As if anxious to give them every advantage, the Prince entered into a correspond-

Dilatory proceeding of the allies.

Correspondence with the Commissioners.

* Mémoires d'un Homme d'État, tom. ii. p. 235.

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11th.

ence with the conventional commissioners respecting the address of Dumouriez, to which he received a lofty answer, pointing out the disgrace of abetting the treason of the fugitive general, and, contrary to the principles of honour, receiving the members of the Convention as prisoners from his hands. The French, they said, "would have abhorred such an act of baseness in one of his nation, and would have sent back hostages, who, by the law of nations, could not have been received from such a traitor." Some further communications ensued; but the Convention gained the advantage of commanding their commissioners to discontinue what they termed a disgraceful controversy.

13th.
Condé
blockaded.

Losing thus all hopes of negotiation, the Prince made a forward movement; the Prince of Wurtemberg's division blockaded Condé, Latour encamped before Maubeuge, and other Austrian divisions, according to their mode of warfare, formed a cordon, which seemed at once to threaten Maubeuge, Lille, and Valenciennes, as well as Condé, to which town a summons was sent, and the commandant prepared for a siege. Dampierre collected his forces in the camp of Famars, near Valenciennes, in front of the Austrians; an offensive demonstration which animated the courage of his men. Still the month was wasted in inaction; the Prince of Cobourg, although much stronger than his enemy, required from Vienna a reinforcement of thirty thousand men; and, after beginning the campaign under the most felicitous auspices, settled into that slow and methodical course of war which, in the preceding year, had been so fatal in the plains of Champagne.

Arrival of the
British troops.Their improv-
ed condition.

During the negotiations with Dumouriez, the British army, to be commanded by the Duke of York, had been prevented from embarking; but when that cause of delay had ceased, they landed at Ostend, and joined a body of Dutch troops. Since His Royal Highness had been Commander-in-chief, the composition of the army had been greatly improved; abuses, which had prevailed to an almost incredible extent, were removed, defects both in education and discipline

were supplied, and the whole appearance, conduct, and general quality of the army were totally altered. These changes had the recommendation of being gradual and in their progress scarcely perceptible; not, like rash and violent measures, calculated to create momentary wonder and permanent disgust, but to receive their highest encomium from time and experience, the real tests of truth and propriety.

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Dampierre, following the dictates of a sound military judgment, would have remained on the defensive until the arrival of reinforcements; but the impetuous zeal of the ignorant commissioners, with the recollection that his noble birth would expose him to certain destruction if he resisted their behests, forced him into action. He was commanded to raise the blockade of Condé, and, by the decision of a council of war, held at Valenciennes, a general attack was made on the whole line of the Imperial army. The Republicans were repulsed in every direction, and, after a bloody conflict, in which they left two thousand dead on the field, and a portion of their artillery in the hands of the victors, they were pursued to their camp of Famars. Untaught by this event, the commissioners, yielding to the impetuous demand of the soldiers, who deeply resented their recent disgrace, compelled their reluctant General to make a new attack.

May 1.

8th.

The front of the Imperial army extended from Maubeuge to St. Amand, a space of more than ten leagues; with a reserve under Clerfaye. It was covered by redoubts and abattis, and the flanks protected by the rivers Scheldt and Scarpe. The French General, sensible of the rashness of his enterprise, three times gave and revoked the order to attack, but was at length compelled to decide by a peremptory signal from his masters. With characteristic bravery, the French fought on this hopeless day; some success attended their operations on the wings; but the centre, protected by a powerful artillery, was unassailable. Five times they courageously renewed an unavailing attack; the reserve was intrenched in the woods near the abbey of Vicogne. Dampierre, maddened by the

Battle of
St. Amand.

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Death of
Dampierre.

sight of havoc among his troops, pushed forward on horse-back into the post of danger; his son, who acted as his aide-de-camp, implored him not to advance to certain destruction; but the General answered, it was more honourable to perish in the field of glory than under the axe of the guillotine. Almost while he was speaking, a cannon ball carried away his thigh; surgical skill was fruitless, and he met the death he had courted*. He was succeeded in command, for a short period, by Lamarlière, and afterwards by Custine, on whose military knowledge great hopes were placed.

Attack on
St. Amand.

Lamarlière made an attack on St. Amand, but with no better success: he was defeated in every direction, with a loss, according to the French statement, of fifteen hundred men: the British troops acquired great honour by their steadiness and intrepidity†.

Differences
among the
allies.

At a council of war, held at the head-quarters of the Prince of Cobourg, the Duke of York and General Clerfaye strongly urged the propriety of prompt operations on the offensive, that the campaign might not moulder away in sieges and affairs of posts. An army twice beaten, they observed, was not likely to maintain its position; and a complete success against them would give the allies, at once, possession of Condé, would leave Valenciennes invested, and open the direct road to the capital. On the other hand, the Prince of Cobourg and Colonel Mack were of opinion that it was more advisable to await the result of the distractions prevailing in Paris, that they might gain a new point of support in the interior, without which it would not be prudent to advance.

23rd.
Attack on the
camp of
Famars.

It was, however, determined to attack the camp at Famars, situate between Valenciennes and Maubeuge; its right flank was protected by the Scheldt, its left by the Ronelle, its front covered by redoubts on the heights of Anzin; and on the left of Valenciennes was formed an advanced camp. All the French posts on

* The Convention decreed a monument to his memory, which was erected, with suitable inscriptions, near the spot where he fell.

† *Victoires et Conquêtes*, tome i. p. 145 et seqq.—*Mémoires d'un Homme d'État*, tom. ii. p. 280. et seqq.

the whole front of the line were simultaneously attacked by four columns under the Prince of Cobourg, the Duke of York, General Latour, and General Clerfaye. The Prince, although he led fourscore thousand troops against only fifty thousand Republicans, wasted his strength and opportunity in frivolous manœuvres and unimportant attempts; but the British commander turned the right of the French line, and General Ferrari carried the redoubt on the other side of the Ronelle. Conquered at all points, the French, in the shade of evening, evacuated the camp and sought refuge under the walls of Bouchain. The next day the advanced camp of Anzin was taken, after a resolute defence; the French, in their retreat, having thrown into Valenciennes a reinforcement of ten thousand men.

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24th.

This city, being now completely invested, the charge of conducting the siege was confided to the Duke of York, while the French, unmolested by the Austrian Commander-in-chief, were permitted to place themselves, at their leisure, in a post called Cæsar's camp*. The governor, General Ferrand, answered the summons to surrender in the usual phrase, that he would sooner bury himself under the ruins than capitulate; and he persevered in his determination, alleging, as one of his reasons, that a decree of the Convention forbade him, under pain of death, to surrender, at least until a certain day. Batteries, judiciously erected and powerfully served, reduced the greater part of the town to ruins and ashes; famine and disease thinned the population and destroyed one half of the garrison; breaches were made sufficient to admit even the passage of cavalry, and a general assault was in preparation. The Royal Commander mercifully dispatched a second summons to Ferrand, and a copy, with a letter, to the municipality. After the expiration of twenty-four hours, allowed for deliberation, and the interchange of several messages, the place was surrendered; the garrison, amounting, officers included, to nearly

Siege
Valenciennes,

June 13.

July 25.

* Mémoires d'un Homme d'État, tom. ii. p. 281. Victoires et Conquêtes, tom. ii. p. 118.

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1793. August 1.	The fall of Condé accelerated that of Valenciennes, as a portion of the besieging army could then be spared for co-operation. General Chancel, with a garrison of four thousand men, formed from the wreck of Dumouriez's army, had made an exemplary defence. Ill success and repulse did not prevent the repetition of sorties; but the investment at length became complete, and, all supplies being cut off, the garrison and inhabitants were not only reduced to scarcity, but compelled to subsist on the most loathsome aliments. The daily ration of a soldier was two ounces of bread, an equal quantity of horse flesh, an ounce of rice, and a third part of an ounce of grease. When no more than six days of this miserable subsistence remained, the garrison capitulated, marched out with the honours of war, the officers were allowed their parole, but the soldiers were sent prisoners to Cologne and Aix-la-Chapelle. The arms of the Emperor were displayed in the town.
Capture of Condé. April.	During these transactions, the French, five thousand strong, took Furnes, driving before them twelve hundred Dutch troops, who, with their baggage, retired in good order to Ostend. The French, having plundered the town, abandoned it, carrying away several of the magistrates as hostages for the payment of a contribution which they had imposed. An action also took place in the neighbourhood of Werwick, where the French were routed; but in the course of the fight the Prince of Waldeck sustained a mortal wound.
July 13.	In another quarter, the King of Prussia, Prince Hohenloe, and General Wurmser were besieging Lan-
June 1. The French take Furnes.	
Action at Wer- wick. 11th.	
Sieges of May- ence and Lan- dau.	

* The particulars of this siege are related in all the military histories of the time, and with much spirit detailed in *Victoires et Conquêtes*, tom. i. p. 212; and at p. 223, the state of the town and loss of lives are copiously described.

dau and Mayence. Before he quitted the army of the Rhine and Moselle, Custine had adopted vigorous and judicious measures for defending these places, having taken a position at Weissemberg, which was generally acknowledged to be a masterpiece of military skill ; and his last act of command was a spirited, though unsuccessful, attack on all the posts of the invaders. Houchard succeeded Custine, though avowedly incompetent to the command, which was, therefore, again divided, the army of the Moselle being given to Alexander Beauharnois, while Houchard retained that of the Rhine. The French made a successful attack on General Schrœder, and plundered the town of Arlon ; Beauharnois, too, obtained some slight successes, when the Prussians, finding they could make no effectual impression on Landau, converted the siege into a blockade. Mayence also sustained a long and distressing siege : it was protected by a garrison of twenty-two thousand men ; but a detachment of eight thousand, whom Custine, among the last acts of his authority in that quarter, had endeavoured to withdraw, being driven back by the Prussians, the excessive number did not contribute to the safety of the place so much as it exhausted the store of provisions. To guide and control the operations of the garrison, Merlin and Rewbell, two eminent members of the Convention, who had been deputed commissioners, shut themselves up in the town, and endured all the horrors and privations of the siege. An investment had been formed at an early period by Field-Marshal Kalreuth ; but, not having sufficient force to attempt any effectual enterprize, he converted the siege into a blockade, in which state it remained until regular operations commenced under the command of the King of Prussia in person. Much useless bravery having been found only to produce a wanton effusion of blood, Marshal Kalreuth opened a secret conference with Rewbell ; and beneficial consequences might have ensued, but for an unexpected night attack made on the Prussians while their proceedings were suspended, by six thousand Frenchmen, who probably hoped to take the King a prisoner, but

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17th May.

12th June.

7th June.

April.

April 6th.

May 30.

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June 13.

were repulsed, and retired in good order. The siege was immediately pressed with unintermitting alacrity and vigour. A third part of the town and many of the magazines and mills were reduced to ashes; General Meunier was killed in a sortie, regretted, although an enemy, by the King of Prussia, who knew and respected his virtues. Famine in its most frightful excess prevailed. The flesh of horses, cats, and mice, formed the subsistence of the garrison and of the inhabitants; animal oil was used by the soldiers in making their soup; and some of them, having mixed with it unwholesome vegetables, became insane; and to these miseries was added a total deficiency of medicaments in the hospitals. Doyre, the commandant of the town, endeavoured to relieve it by expelling the useless mouths. Two thousand unfortunate old men, women, and children, were sent forth from the gate; but, as the besiegers would not suffer them to pass, they remained a whole night exposed to the fire both of the garrison and the besiegers, and the survivors were in the morning permitted to return to their own habitations. Valuing highly this important frontier town, the Committee of Public Safety sent repeated orders to Beauharnois and Houchard to risk a general action. Both generals hesitated to obey; they saw that their best troops were dispirited, and they had no confidence in the untried levies; General Wurmser, too, who commanded the Austrian force, was not eager for a general engagement; and thus the only result of the orders received was a battle conducted with great spirit, but not calculated to produce any general effect. It was fought between the lines of Weissembourg and the town of Landau, and the French suffered some disadvantage. Intelligence of this affair, with many exaggerated circumstances, was conveyed into Mayence; and although it terminated all hopes of relief, a portion of the garrison resented the thought of a surrender, until they were soothed by some favourable hopes; but at length a capitulation was signed, the same terms being granted as to the garrison of Condé. No stipulation was made in favour of those subjects of the King

July 19.

Surrender of
Mayence.

July 22.

of Prussia who had shown an attachment to the French, and who were called clubbists; but it was understood that the conquerors would not recognise any who chose to make their escape by mixing with the garrison. Two more actions, by which no beneficial effect was produced, closed for the present all military operations in this quarter, and the French retreated into Weissembourg and Lauterbourg*.

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22nd and 27th.

The surrender of Mayence struck with consternation the Committee of Public Safety; after the defeat of the French at the Camp of Famars, the whole body had been removed for incapacity, and new members appointed, consisting altogether of strenuous members of the Mountain party. Barrère, their constant orator, delivered on this occasion a report, imputing the calamity entirely to the treachery of Custine, affirming that his provisions were sufficient for support of the garrison until Houchard could advance to relieve the place, which, he said, he should have accomplished in eight days. On this report, a decree of accusation was voted against Custine; he was arrested in the midst of his camp, and taken to Paris to be tried before the Revolutionary Tribunal.

Custine arrested.

July 11.

25th.

If a well-combined and effectual attack upon France was ever to be made, the period immediately succeeding the fall of Valenciennes was the most favourable. The allies had a well-organized military force of nearly three hundred thousand men between Bale and Ostend, a body amply sufficient to form a basis of military operations; it would have enabled them, with one hundred and eighty thousand, to march upon Paris, which they might have reached in twelve or fifteen marches. No sufficient reason was assigned, at the time, for not pursuing this vigorous, manly, and politic course, and, at this, it appears an inconceivable infatuation in the allies.

Observations
on the conduct
of the allies.

When hostilities were declared by Spain, the French were expelled and their property sequestered;

War of the
French against
Spain.
23rd July.

* *Victoires et Conquêtes* ubi supra; *Mémoires d'un Homme d'État*, tom. ii. p. 293 to 320; and see *Gibbon's Posthumous Works*, vol. i. p. 401, 8vo.

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20th April.

25th June.

1st July.

War in Pied-
mont.

armies were equipped on the frontier, and fleets prepared at Ferrol, Carthagena, and Cadiz. The Convention decreed the levy of a hundred thousand men, to defend the country from Bayonne to Perpignan; but such a force could not be suddenly obtained, and they commenced, in an unprepared state, a campaign in two branches, called those of the eastern and western Pyrenées.

On the east side, Don Ricardos, the Spanish general, with twenty thousand foot and two thousand horse, sweeping before him the slight obstacles raised by Generals Vilotte and Gauthier, entered the French territory and laid siege to Perpignan. The Republicans changed and superseded the generals without altering their fortune; while Ricardos captured St. Laurent, which opened a communication by sea with Sardinia; and Bellegarde falling, after a bombardment of thirty-four days, placed Perpignan itself in imminent danger.

On the western side, the French directed their chief efforts to the defence of the vallies of Ossun and Aspe; but no considerable hostilities took place at those points. About four hundred national guards, injudiciously posted at La Caze de Brosset, in the vale of Ossun, were surrounded and cut to pieces; and the Spaniards in the neighbourhood of Roncal and Salazar, after some slight skirmishes, burnt the village of St. Engrace, and great exertions were made to defend the passages by St. Jean Pié de Port. To detail the particulars of this campaign would only bring into notice actions of small general importance, and places, the names and position of which had escaped the notice of the makers of maps and the compilers of Gazetteers; on the whole, it was disadvantageous to the French*.

General Anselme having been removed for misconduct, Biron succeeded him in command of the forces acting against Sardinia, called the army of Italy. He successfully attacked the Piedmontese in their en-

* *Victoires et Conquêtes*, tome i. p. 127 to 175. *Mémoires de la Dernière Guerre entre la France et l'Espagne dans les Pyrénées Occidentales*, par Le Citoyen B***.

trenchments at Sospetto, drove them out, and took about three hundred prisoners; an exploit rather glorious than useful. A more important attempt was made by Admiral Truguet on Cagliari, the capital of Sardinia. By the command of his government, he sailed from Toulon at the close of the preceding year, with twenty-two men of war, beside inferior vessels, and made an attack, in which he was well opposed, one of his ships burnt, another run ashore, and several grievously damaged. A body of undisciplined troops, who effected a landing, were also repulsed, and the admiral returned to Toulon to refit. When this was accomplished, and his troops augmented by seven thousand men, he again presented himself before Cagliari, and, after several failures, occasioned by a determined resistance, landed four thousand men; but they were defeated; and a violent tempest having arisen, Truguet, after seeing one of his ships of eighty-four guns upset, several in imminent danger, and many of his transports and other vessels cast ashore, was glad to re-embark and regain the port from which he had sailed*.

The war of La Vendée was not confined to the department which bore that name; it extended over Les deux Sevres, La Loire inférieure, Mayenne, and Mayne et Loire. With incredible rapidity, the insurgents took Machecoul, Legé, Chatillon, and various other towns, in all which they obtained recruits, arms, and ammunition. Having divided their force into several bodies of ten or twelve thousand, they made successful attacks in various points, and were joined by great reinforcements of priests, nobles, malcontents of every class, French and foreign deserters, gamekeepers, smugglers, and servants left without employ by the emigration of their masters; in short, by all whom principle or lack of advancement rendered dissatisfied with the revolution.

The Convention, deceived by false reports, treated them at first as a handful of brigands; but repeated intelligence of their successes, which extended even to several strong and populous cities, altered that rash

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1793.
Attack on
Cagliari.

Feb. 3rd.

17th.

War in La
Vendée.

* Victoires et Conquêtes, tome i. p. 97. Memoirs dictated by Napoleon to General Gourgaud, vol. i. p. 1.

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June 9.

29th.

July 15.

18th.

opinion, especially when, after a long series of victories, Fontenay, the capital of La Vendée, fell into their hands. Pursuing their advantages, they captured Thuars, and, evacuating Fontenay, pressed towards Saumur, which they captured. Then, crossing the Loire, they took Angers, threatened Tours and Mans, and laid siege to Nantes, where they were repulsed, and General Canclaux gained great honour by his judicious conduct of the defence.

General Biron was now called from the army of Italy to head this war, and was flattered by some slight successes, although the balance of advantages was generally against him. He promised to take Chatillon and Chollet, and to exterminate the rebels. He succeeded, indeed, in taking Chatillon, but was surrounded by the insurgents, his infantry cut to pieces, his artillery captured, and himself escaped with great difficulty, protected by his cavalry. The Republicans, meditating a general attack, entered La Vendée by the bridges of Cé, and encamped at Martigné Briand. They were attacked by forty thousand men, whom they repulsed, but immediately began a retreat toward Montaigu. In their march, they were constantly harassed by large parties, and, when fatigued with three days' progress, attacked by fifty thousand men, who routed and drove them in disorder across the country in every direction. In their panic, arms, knapsacks, and accoutrements, were thrown away as impediments to speed; some fled into the neighbouring towns, and some even to Paris; so that their generals, attempting, three days after the engagement, to make a muster at Chinon, could find only four thousand men.

While the main body was thus engaged, the division of the lower Poitou, commanded by Charrette, occupied the whole country which separates Nantes from the Sables. Many petty skirmishes took place, in which success was divided; but when Canclaux had saved Nantes, he no longer suffered his army to waste their strength in small expeditions, but contented himself with preserving and fortifying his positions. The insurgents were in their highest state of prosperity:

their chiefs issued a prudent and moderate proclamation, in the name of Louis the Seventeenth; many emigrants quitted the frontiers of Holland and Germany to join the defenders of the altar and the throne, and many were waiting to unite with them at Jersey and Guernsey; their partizans grew daily more numerous, and encouraged sanguine hopes of ultimate success.

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Of the insurrection at Lyons, mention has already been made. At Marseilles, there was a feeble and ineffectual effort, which, by timely dexterity, was soon suppressed; but Toulon, the chief naval arsenal,—the grand, beautiful sea-port—presented a very different view. The inhabitants were divided into three classes; the rich and independent were pure royalists; the trading and middle class constitutionalists, and the artificers and labouring people Jacobins. According to the prevailing policy, all the civic offices of power and authority were confided to the latter class, who oppressed and insulted the other two, until resentment and the necessity for self-protection made them forget their political difference of opinion, and concur heartily in a desire to throw off the yoke of their oppressors.

Toulon.

Tyranny of the
Jacobins.

Admiral Lord Hood, after an ineffectual attempt to assist the people of Marseilles, was in the Mediterranean with a powerful squadron of English, Spanish, and Neapolitan vessels, and blockaded the port of Toulon, in which were eighteen ships of the line, beside frigates. The Conventional army, under Carteaux, was approaching, and the inhabitants, having before them no alternative but the mercy of Robespierre, or the protection of the British commander, sought the latter. The noble admiral had issued proclamations to the inhabitants of Toulon, and of the towns and provinces in the south of France, that if a candid and explicit declaration in favour of monarchy were made at Toulon and Marseilles, and the standard of Royalty hoisted, the ships in the harbour dismantled, and the port and forts placed provisionally at his disposal, so as to allow of egress and regress with safety, the

Negotiation
with
Lord Hood.

His proclama-
tions.

Aug. 23.

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The people
refuse the re-
publican
constitution.

August.

Aug. 23.

people of Provence should have all the assistance and support His Britannic Majesty's fleet could give, and private property should be protected; and whenever peace should take place, the port, ships in harbour, and stores of every kind, agreeable to a schedule, should be restored to France. When the people were required to swear to maintain the new democratic constitution, voted by the Convention, an insurrection ensued; the constitution was burnt by the hands of the hangman; the leaders of the Jacobin party, and two representatives of the people, Bayle and Beauvais, were thrown into prison; the doors of the Jacobin club room were forced, and their papers destroyed; a new criminal tribunal was created, which, in bloody dispatch, rivalled its model in Paris.

The general committee of the sections of Toulon answered Lord Hood's proclamation by a declaration that, being resolved to adopt the monarchic government voted in 1789, they had proclaimed Louis the Seventeenth, and sworn to acknowledge him, and no longer suffer the despotism of the tyrants who governed the country.

But when all these things appeared to be thus quietly arranged, an unexpected obstacle arose; while Admiral Trogoff, who entered perfectly into these views, was on shore, forming the necessary arrangements, his Vice Admiral, Saint Julien, being strongly in the opposite party, convoked his officers and crews, and persuaded them to swear fidelity to the republic, and that they would never permit the squadron of an enemy to enter the road, and he manœuvred accordingly. The party in the town declared him a rebel, manned the forts, and prepared red-hot ball to destroy the fleet, when the crisis was terminated by a very simple occurrence. A lieutenant, named Van Kempen, commanding the frigate *La Perle*, a partizan of the royalists, separated from the fleet, and, approaching the shore, received the Admiral on board. He immediately hoisted his flag, and the officers of many of the other ships, yielding professional obedience to this signal, deserted the adverse combination. The

royalist cause triumphed ; St. Julien retired with seven ships which still adhered to him, and Lord Hood, no longer opposed, took possession of the town in the name of Louis the Seventeenth*.

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Before this event, the Duke of York, with the British and Hanoverian troops, and a strong body of Austrians under Field Marshal Alvinzy, had separated from the army of the Prince of Cobourg, to form the siege of Dunkirk, the Prince himself taking the opposite direction, to occupy Quesnoi.

Aug. 10.
Siege of Dunkirk.

As all prospect of a strong operation against the capital was thus at an end, it becomes necessary to return to the conduct and measures of the Conventional government. A new constitution was prepared, arranged, debated, and decreed, in less than a fortnight†. It is of little importance to discuss the merits of a code which they who framed it never put into execution ; it was accepted under the influence of terror and the cogency of the guillotine, but suspended in order to give operation to a mode of government against which its definitions and declarations were in diametrical opposition. The assertion of general liberty and equality, of the right of professing and promulgating opinions, the freedom of all who had not wilfully violated some known law, and the right to be tried by a competent tribunal, on a charge founded on the breach of such law, and adequately proved, was incompatible with a system in which men were swept into prison in masses, for no defined offence ; where the expression of an opinion, either in politics or religion, was a passport to death ; where individuals were arrested because they had relations who were emigrants, or because they were included by implication in a list of those who were charged with some unknown or undefined political offence. The constitution was hallowed in Paris by an inaugural ceremony, in which nature, represented by a colossal statue of a woman with limpid water streaming from her breasts, was

Proceedings
in the Conven-
tion.

June 24.
New constitu-
tion decreed
and suspended.

Aug. 10.

* Victoires et Conquêtes, tom. i. p. 241. Mémoires d'un Homme d'État, tom. ii. p. 356. Moniteur and other Journals and Collections of State Papers.

† Revue Chronologique, p. 28.

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Government of
the committees

worshipped as a goddess; and a printing press, a ploughshare, and a pike, were exhibited as the foundations and securities of her dominion. The Convention went in procession to this foolish and impious ceremony; Herault de Schelles, as president, led the march, and, at six different stations, pronounced speeches, in which the atrocity of the sentiments is hardly sufficient to restrain the laughter provoked by their extreme absurdity.

In the absence of any defined rule, the powers of government were confided to the Committee of Public Safety, aided, but not controlled, by that of public security. Robespierre, Billaud-Varennés, Couthon, St. Just, and Collot d'Herbois, formed the predominating committee; Barrère's facility in investing their ferocious decrees and delusive reports in flowing language, made him eminently useful, and his talents were often employed; Jean Bon Saint André, a Calvinist minister, distinguished by his ferocious barbarity, presided over the marine; while, with much more beneficial effect, Carnot, aided, but not guided, by Prieur de la Côte d'Or, directed military operations. This body promulgated decrees and sent into the departments agents invested with unlimited authority. The Convention soon ceased to exhibit more than the semblance of a legislature; their number was so reduced by arrest, expulsion, fear, and missions to the departments and the armies, that the assembled body rarely exceeded two hundred.

Reign of Terror.

It would be a long digression from the objects of this work to describe or even to enumerate the strange means and savage decrees which founded and strengthened the system commonly, and most properly, denominated the reign of terror. The Revolutionary Tribunal, already mentioned, most effectually swayed the people of Paris. Emigrants, priests, and all who were related to, or suspected of holding intercourse with them, sending relief to them, or assisting in the concealment of their property, all who were accused of monopoly or forestalling, and many other extensive denominations, were subjected to its jurisdiction. Of some it would be difficult to define the crime, although it required

Revolutionary
Tribunal.

little penetration to anticipate the fate : such were those charged with incivism, fanaticism, indifference, or conspiracy without declaring its object or meaning*. Nor were these powers unnecessary, considering the state of the prisons, which on the day in which the overthrow of the Brissotines was accomplished, received thirteen hundred additional inmates, and their number was rapidly augmented by daily and nightly captures. That the judges might not permit qualms and scruples to interfere with the progress of judicial vengeance, it was decreed that they should declare their opinions in public, or, in other words, subject themselves to the punishment of death, if any feeling of justice or of mercy made them hesitate in pronouncing it against others ; and the jurors, nine in number, received each a daily allowance of eighteen livres (fifteen shillings), or, as they sat every day, nearly two hundred and seventy-five pounds a-year. The filling of the prisons and the operations of this horrible criminal court were aided by the creation of committees of watchfulness, who had power to enter houses by night or by day, and seize on persons and documents ; by an encouragement of spies and informers, both within the prisons and without, which rendered conviction certain†.

The adherents of Brissot who escaped from Paris, directed a wandering course into the departments, with a general notion of exciting an insurrection against the Convention, but with no defined or particular aim. They were baffled in all their endeavours ; they never mustered more than nineteen in a body, and were obliged to separate from each other by the hot pursuit which was made after them in every quarter. Of the whole party, only one escaped to relate the toils, difficulties, and disgraces they underwent ; the rest fell under the axe of the executioner, avoided it by suicide,

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1793.

June 26.

July 2.

Proceedings of
the Brissotines.

* Laçrételle, tome ii. p. 63 ; *Moniteur*, 2 Aout, 1793 ; and for the Constitution itself, see *Rivington's Annual Register*, vol. xxxv. p. 292, and all the *Journals* and *Periodical Works* of the time.

† Laçrételle, tome ii. p. 328. This author states the number of spies at 500,000, and the pay of each at ten pence per diem, about seven millions and a half sterling per annum.

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or perished in profound obscurity, leaving their fate unknown*.

1793.

Charlotte Corday.

At Caen, a young woman of powerful mind and interesting appearance, called several times at the Town Hall, where the fugitives resided, and held conferences with one of them, Barbaroux, a remarkably handsome man, for whom (without the least stain on her character) she is supposed to have entertained a warm affection. Instigated by her own ardent feelings alone, and not counselled or impelled by any of the deputies, she repaired to Paris, sought out the dwelling of Marat, and, with a sharp knife, stabbed him as he was coming out of a bath. She was speedily led to a trial, and none of the ferocious injustice of the revolutionary tribunal was called for on the occasion; she avowed and gloried in her act. Her victim, after lying in state, was interred in the Pantheon, with more honours and ceremonies than could rightly be bestowed on a mere mortal†.

Murders Marat.

July 12.

17th.

Petitions
against Brissot
and his party.

This event, ascribed, without any just reason, to the instigation of the Brissotines in the departments, hastened on the fate of those who were in captivity. The sections of Paris presented petitions, complaining of the delay of justice against these known and undisputed traitors. Similar messages came from the departments; and thus these artificers of ruin, proscription, and murder, saw their own contrivances employed against themselves. Amar presented to the Convention, from the Committee of General Safety, a long, calumnious, and absurd paper, called an Acte d'Accusation, or indictment, and twenty-one of them were sent for trial to the Revolutionary Tribunal. As the case proceeded, the prisoners, by the ingenuity of their cross-examinations and the eloquence with which they urged their objections to the proceeding, or made appeals to the people, embarrassed and confounded their

October 3.
Twenty-one
are tried.

* Lacrételle, tome i. p. 266, and all histories of the time. The survivor was Louvet; and his narrative, entitled *Le Recit de mes Périls*, &c. is highly interesting and characteristic. With proud republican boasts and the disclosure of affecting facts, he mixes up a half-comic whimsicality, and relates circumstances and describes situations which make it difficult to refrain from laughter.

† Histories in general; and *La Vallée, Histoire des Factions*, tome ii. p. 109.

accusers. Recourse was had to the Convention, who passed a decree that when a trial had lasted three days, the jury might declare that their conscience was sufficiently instructed, and bring in their verdict. This decided at once the fate of the prisoners; the jury immediately pronounced them all guilty. One of them, Valazé, prevented his execution by suicide; the rest were carried to the guillotine.

Many other early movers in the revolution, or violent promoters of its atrocities, fell in like manner under the system to which their exertions had paved the way; and in works to which the matter is more appropriate, the circumstances attending their fall are detailed with interest, and calculated to produce good moral effects. Among them may be reckoned Manuel, Rabaut de St. Etienne, Madame Roland, and Bailly. The list might be largely protracted, and the narrative of each execution is calculated to affect both the judgment and the feelings.

These victims, whatever right they might have to complain of those who sacrificed them, had still to acknowledge that their fate was drawn on by their own delinquencies; but in turning to the persecution of the Royal Family, no such circumstance of extenuation is to be found; there, all is injustice and violence, stamped with indelible characters of cruelty and meanness. Returning to a passage in Voltaire, already cited, it may be observed, that the fate of Louis resembled that of the Spartan, rather than of the Christian king. The wife and family of Charles were untouched by the executioner; the widow and mother of Agis were, with him, devoted to destruction; and, in like manner, the wife and sister of the French king were hunted down and murdered with unrelenting savageness by the destroyers of the monarch. After the execution of Louis, every change in political affairs produced additional severity toward the unhappy survivors; and in the treatment of them, every feeling of humanity, every suggestion of pity for fallen greatness, even every regard for decency toward sex, was alike disregarded. The ruffians to whose custody the three Princesses

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1793.
29th.
and executed.

31.
Other execu-
tions.

Horrible treat-
ment of the
Royal Family.

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1793.

April 20.

May 31.
Louis XVII
separated from
his mother.
July 3.Aug. 1.
The Queen
removed to the
Conciergerie.

were confided spoke ostentatiously the obscene and disgusting language indicative of French vulgarity, delighted in enforcing the strictest rules of privation, and resented, with acrimonious jealousy, the attentions and marks of respect which habit and a confirmed sense of propriety induced these unfortunate personages to display toward each other. On the defection of Dumouriez, the windows of their apartments were blocked up, so as to be impervious from without, and to admit but very insufficient portions of light and air. On the suggestion of a female attendant, that some communication was maintained between the prisoners and a party out of the prison, an order was issued by the Commune, and the execution of it confided to Hébert, the lowest and filthiest of the revolutionary reptiles. It enabled him, without restraint, to search all the prisoners, and was executed in the night, and not only their persons but their beds were strictly examined; and at last the commissioners were obliged to report that they had discovered nothing to warrant the inspection*. The menial household offices in their apartments were performed by the Queen and the Princess Elizabeth with their own hands; and, as an extreme specimen of degrading meanness, the Convention decreed that the subsistence of the Royal Family should be limited to the smallest sufficient portion of the most ordinary food†. As if to show their unanimity in evil, the Convention decreed that the young King should be separated from his female relatives; and, notwithstanding his tears and struggles and the heart-rending affliction of the whole family, the decree was executed.

After the capture of Valenciennes, in order perhaps to give a new impulse to the public mind, or, as some have suggested, to gain some influence over the Emperor, by means of his feelings, Barrère obtained a decree, referring Marie-Antoinette's trial to the Revo-

* Moniteur du 20 et 24 Avril.

† Prud' homme—Erreurs, Fautes et Crimes de la Revolution, tome v. p.212. In this work, p. 208 et seqq. will be found specimens of the disgusting language with which these wretches tortured and insulted their victims.

lutionary Tribunal, and her person to the prison of the Conciergerie, usually considered as a certain step toward the scaffold. In a filthy and unwholesome cell of this horrible abode, the unfortunate Queen was confined for the residue of her days, with a guard placed day and night in an adjacent room, separated only by a thin partition, so that all their disgusting speeches and insulting songs were constantly in her ears. As it was not usual for persons sent to this dreadful abode to remain long in suspense about their fate, the delay of two months between the committal and trial of the Queen occasioned some surprise, and lent some support to the opinion that her condemnation or safety was held out to the Emperor as an alternative dependent on the course of his proceedings.

At length, a day was appointed, and a trial took place, which, while it fixes an indelible stigma on her persecutors and slanderers, vindicates, in a triumphant manner, the virtue and fame of the aspersed sovereign. Although rewards and honours without measure would have attended the disclosure, not a witness could be found to substantiate any one of the calumnious imputations with which, for so many years, her enemies had endeavoured to blacken her life. Their inculpations did not charge facts committed in a foreign country, or even in a remote province, under doubtful circumstances, or capable of equivocal explanation; the scenes assigned were Paris and Versailles; the irregularities gross, flagrant, undisguised; and yet, at her trial, no person was found sufficiently daring to advance a single imputation. To describe the act of accusation prepared against her by Fouquier Tinville, would merely be to analyze a mass of atrocities and absurdities which would disgrace the most unenlightened society; to display the conduct and demeanour of the unfortunate Queen, would be to attempt a picture, exceeding human conception in its sublime dignity. Whatever might be her feelings, no expression of contempt or impatience escaped her, either in word or gesture; her answers to interrogatories were direct, firm, and sensible; and her apostrophe on one occasion, when an

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1793.

Oct. 12.
Her trial.

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1793.

12th,
and murder.

Aug. 1.
The tombs of
kings
destroyed.

10th.

Proceedings
against the
Duke of
Orléans.

intercourse, not to be thought of among human beings, with her son, a child, eight years of age, was charged upon her, ascended into true sublimity*. Nor could it be supposed that a hope of awakening the justice or exciting the compassion of her judges could influence her; she knew her position too well. Her condemnation, certain before her trial began, was speedily pronounced, and, to complete the disgrace of the inhuman blood-hunters, she was carried to the place of execution in an open cart, in a mean and vulgar dress, and, so scrupulously rapacious had been the plunder of the royal party, even a portion of that dress had been borrowed in the gaol. She submitted to her fate with a calm, unpretending dignity, the best proof of a clear conscience and an elevated mind†.

Beside the trial of Marie Antoinette, Barrère's decree contained other propositions relative to the Royal Family. One, that all members of the Capet race, that is, all Bourbons, except the two children of Louis, and those who were under the sword of the law, should be transported. The Princess Elizabeth was to remain until after the trial of the Queen; but, in the mean time, all tombs of deceased kings, whether at Saint Denis or elsewhere, were to be destroyed. The latter part was first executed with a characteristic mixture of ferocity and frolic; kings, statesmen, generals, men to whom France owed the most of her prosperity and glory, were dragged from their tombs, and their heads and limbs thrown about as play-things, in fiend-like jocularly‡. The Oriflamme, the consecrated banner, under which the nation had, during so many centuries, marched to glory, was also destroyed.

One of the Bourbon family who might be considered under the sword of the law, was the Duke of Orléans. Ruined in fortune and character, disappointed of the influence he had expected to possess, hated by many,

* For the Trial, see *Procès des Bourbons*; *Moniteur*; *Debrett's State Papers*; and all the periodical publications.

† *Lacrételle*, tom. ii. p. 235; *La Vallée*, tom. ii. p. 120; and all histories of the period

‡ *Lacrételle*, tom. ii. p. 263.

and despised by all parties, he had, since his atrocious vote against the King, dragged on a precarious and miserable existence. By order of the Convention, he was arrested, and sent first to the Abbaye, and then to Marseilles. At this place, it was supposed that he had some secret friends, and, after he had suffered six months' imprisonment, he was included in Amar's report against the Brissotine conspirators, brought to Paris, lodged in the Conciergerie, tried before the Revolutionary Tribunal, convicted of conspiring against the unity and indivisibility of the republic, and sent to immediate execution. His enemies practised upon him all the grossnesses of revolutionary cruelty; the mob pursued him to the scaffold with yells, shouts, reproaches, and execrations, and they made the cart stop before the Palais Royal, the seat of his plots and his debaucheries, that he might read the inscription which declared it forfeited to the nation. To the disappointment of those who sought to extract, from his feebleness of character, some expression or some display which should gratify their malignity, his whole demeanor was composed, dignified, and princely. He heard, without seeming to notice it, the abuse of the populace; he read, with apparent indifference, the inscription on his palace; he conversed with his priest without any affectation of infidel hardihood, or of enthusiastic eagerness; and he submitted his person to the executioner without the slightest appearance of terror or alarm. His death proved that there existed in his bosom a spark of divine fire, which, if it had not been stifled by luxury and debauchery, or dimmed by the precepts of infidel philosophy, might have been cherished into a bright flame of patriotism and bravery, and have cheered, warmed, and enlightened his country.

One more victim to the rage against royalty distinguished the period. It was the murder of a wretched woman, Madame Du Barry, who had been a mistress of Louis the Fifteenth. She was safe in England; but an ill-timed emotion of avarice, and an unfounded confidence in the generosity and forbearance of her

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1793.
May, 7—11.

Oct. 3.

Nov. 6

Madame
Du Barry.

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Dec. 9.
Efforts against
religion.

countrymen, induced her to go to Paris. She was arrested, tried with several persons whose names she did not know, and executed with them and her brothers.

These and similar acts shewed how completely the leaders of the French nation had expelled from their system the love of man, while many others demonstrated how effectually they had discarded and how strenuously they laboured to eradicate that principle upon which alone a well-supported love of our fellow-creatures can be founded, the fear of God. From the early proceedings of the Constituent Assembly, and the state of the public mind throughout the kingdom, the fall of the established church might be foreseen; but subsequent proceedings rendered it equally certain that religion itself and all its revelations and sanctions must soon be trampled into the dust. The spirit of the times strongly impelled matters to this conclusion. All classes were united against the clergy. Financiers, men of property, land-holders, lawyers, philosophers, dissenters of all classes, and even those inferior members of the church who were envious of the more ample endowments enjoyed by those above them; all these favoured the total overthrow of religion, not the improvement in the practice or restraint on the conduct of its ministers. The same principles, with vast exaggeration, possessed the lower classes, especially in towns. Revolutionary journalists and the writers of popular libels added to their imprecations against priests and monks, daring blasphemies against the Christian faith, and against the Deity. Men, grossly ignorant, invoked Voltaire and Rousseau, the only philosophers whose names they had learnt to pronounce, to support doctrines of atheism, which the one had strenuously decried, and the other had eloquently refuted*. Very soon after the legislative plunder of the clergy, followed the desecration of holy edifices, and the cathedral of Notre Dame, wrested from its Christian purposes, became a heathen temple for the remains of those whom faction or folly chose to deify,

Desecration
of churches.

* Lacrételle, tom. viii. p. 1.

under the name of the Pantheon. In this asylum was interred the body of Mirabeau, to be removed when the varying breeze of public acclamation no longer favoured him; hither, with childish and disgusting ceremonies, were removed the exhumed ashes of Voltaire, afterward those of Rousseau, and recently the offensive body of Marat.

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Pursuing the course of an irreligious intolerance, the Convention decreed, on a report made by Cambacères, that marriage was a mere compact attended with the consequence of maintaining children; and gave power to dissolve the tie, on a persevering expression of will by either party; and they fixed the age for entering into the engagement, in boys, at fifteen years, and in girls at thirteen. Even this restriction appeared to Chabot and Cambon too severe; instinct and nature, they said, would point out to each party the proper time, and all prohibitions were adverse to liberty. By their decree, the legislature disregarded all considerations of religion and of educating children in the practice of virtue or good morals; and in their debate they treated human beings as mere cattle, about whom their chief anxiety should be the production of an useful or profitable breed*. To render matrimony still more a mere unavailing ceremony, a law was passed giving to illegitimate children the same rights of succession with those born in wedlock, and this decree was to have a retro-active effect.

Laws on
Marriage.

Aug. 22.

Another triumph over the Christian religion and the usages of European nations was achieved by the establishment of a new calendar, which was introduced by a report drawn up by Fabre d'Eglantine, in terms equally puerile and affected. For the purpose of obliterating every trace of Sundays, holydays, feasts and fasts, the beginning, date, and division of the year into months and weeks, were abolished. The year was described by twelve equal months, of thirty days, which were divided into decades, or periods of ten days: each of these months had a new name; some

Oct. 5.
Republican
calendar.

* Moniteur du 23 et 24 Aout, 1793.

† Laerételle, tom. xi. p. 333.

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referring to the produce of the earth, or course of agricultural employment; as, Vendémiaire, for vintage; Messidor, for harvest; Fructidor, for fruit; Floreal, for flowers: others to the weather; as Brumaire, for fogs; Nivose, for snow: but all were adapted to the meridian of Paris alone. Nivose would be at Pondicherry as ridiculous as Vendémiaire in Lapland; nor were the names even suited to all parts of France. Beside an appellation allotted to each day, denoting its ordinal station in the decade, as primidi, duodi, each had another, derived from implements of husbandry, the produce of the earth, or the animal creation; as, apple, beet-root, goose, plough, roller. But as these twelvemonths only occupied three-hundred and sixty days, the remaining five in the common year were tacked on at the end, and denominated sansculottides. The tenth day, or end of every decade, was considered a festival, and devoted to some of the virtues, relations, or accidents of life. The whimsical patchwork was completed by adding to every fourth year, instead of the twenty-ninth of February in the Bissextile, a day which, for the sake of pre-eminent distinction, was called *le jour de la Revolution**. The year and the era were to begin, in honour of the abolition of royalty, on the twenty-second of September, and from that to the corresponding day in the following, was to be dated, one, two, and so following.

Conduct of
the Clergy.

Encouraged by these successes, and aspiring still after greater and more signal triumphs, the atheistical party obtained decrees, in consequence of which baptism, like marriage, could only be celebrated in the strictest privacy; the priest and the parent, if detected, were equally liable to death, as incorrigible fanatics. Equal rigour was shewn toward ecclesiastics who approached the bed of the dying to administer religious consolation; yet the clergy, who dared to remain, to their honour be it remembered, braved every danger, used every device, essayed every disguise, in performing what in their church was considered an indispensable

* For the calendar, see all the Periodical works of the time, and Talma's Chronology, p. 274.

rite. Invested in the habits of apothecaries' attendants, of humble tradesmen, or of national guards, they heard confessions, gave absolution and benediction, and administered the viaticum.

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Immediately on the establishment of the republican calendar, deputations from the Cordeliers went to the Convention, declaring that they would no longer endure the presence of priests, and requiring the suppression of the salaries which had been allowed them out of the plunder of their property. They were forbidden to exercise any trade or calling to eke out their scanty pittance; all priests and nuns, who had not taken the oaths to the republic, were deprived of certificates of residence, and declared suspected; the sale or exhibition of images of saints, rings, chaplets, and rosaries, was prohibited; and the popular clubs refused certificates of their admission into their halls. Fouché, being on mission at Nevers, issued a decree, that all religious signs in streets, squares, and public places, should be annihilated, and priests prohibited, on pain of imprisonment, from appearing any where, except in their temples, in the clerical garb. Every citizen deceased was also, within eight and forty hours, to be interred, without ceremony, in a burial place, common to all persuasions, planted with trees, under the shade of which was to be an image representing sleep, and on the door of the inclosure an inscription: "Death is an eternal sleep." The Commune of Paris honoured the letter, announcing this edict, with loud applauses, and decreed a similar measure for the capital. The Jacobin club having voted an application to the Convention to make all priests give up their letters of priesthood to be burnt, many anticipated the decree by a voluntary sacrifice. The general tendency of publications devoted to the governing party, was to destroy all remains of religion; and the Convention received with loud plaudits every letter, in which a priest proposed to resign his salary, vilified revelation, and abjured his God.

Persecution of
Priests.

17th Oct.

Death declared
to be an eter-
nal sleep.

27th Oct.
Priests re-
nounce their
orders.

The Cordeliers, who were most active in promoting these disgraceful scenes, obtained a complete triumph,

7th. Nov.

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when the constituted authorities of the department and commune of Paris, accompanied by the bishop and several curés, attended at the bar. Momoro, one of the administrators of the commune, introduced the members of the clerical body, declaring their intention to divest themselves of the character with which superstition had clothed them; the great example would be followed by their colleagues, and no other worship acknowledged but liberty, equality, and eternal truth. Gobet, on this day, completed his detestable apostacy; explicitly denying the Deity, whose minister he had been for forty years, he renounced his functions, throwing off his clerical vestments, and, with his vicars, deposited on the desk their letters of priesthood. They were invited to the honours of the sitting, and received the fraternal embrace; and most of the clergy in the Convention, as Lindet, Coupé, Villiers, Julien, Chabot, Gregoire, and Sieyes, followed the example, and vied with each other in ribaldry and blasphemy. Letters were daily received from the departments, announcing the apostacy of priests; and frequent deputations attended at the bar with the spoils of churches and shrines; but the amount produced was so small, in proportion to the value known to exist, that it was evident that nearly nine-tenths had been embezzled.

Nov. 10.
Goddess of
Reason wor-
shipped.

These exhibitions were only preparatory to the consummation of national idolatry in a grand fête, where Reason was worshipped as a deity, and represented as actually present, in the person of an opera dancer, of impure life, and almost an idiot. She was carried by four men in an arm-chair, to receive the embraces of her worshippers in the Convention, who all attended in the Cathedral of Paris to celebrate this anti-religious festival*.

Frivolities.

Amidst these profanations and horrors, a spirit of frivolity often presented itself. Great pains were bestowed on arguing against the issue of assignats with the royal effigy, and ordaining that the coin of the

* Letter from Gouverneur Morris to Thomas Jefferson.—Life by Jared Sparks, vol. ii. p. 380.

Republic should bear, for a legend, "The Sovereign People," though many members were dissatisfied that the inscription did not declare the people alone to be sovereign. Twelfth day (*le jour des rois*) was abolished, the game of chess solemnly disroyalized, the pieces receiving new denominations; and a decree was made, authorising the destruction of armorial bearings and ensigns of feudality and royalty, which the Commune enforced by permitting persons to destroy all pictures and busts, and all plates and moulds bearing, or intended to stamp, royal or chivalric emblems. Nerved with this decree, malice and ignorance began a dismal havoc on ornaments in bas relief, statues, bronzes, antiques, pictures, and medals, books with coats of arms stamped on their covers or title pages, and even maps where the north was indicated by a fleur-de-lys. The Convention was at length obliged to interfere, and partially modified, though they would not repeal, the law. Robespierre, too, checked the rage for harsh and brutal manners under pretext of equality, by obtaining a decree that all petitioners should appear at the bar uncovered, and that the members themselves should cease to wear their hats during the sitting.

Dec. 20.

In such a state, without law, liberty, morals, or religion, possessing neither money nor credit, with hostile armies in possession of many of their towns, and alarming rebellions pervading populous districts of their land, the cause of the Republic might have been considered hopeless; but, on the contrary, from this state of depression originated a change of circumstances which rendered France not only secure in herself, but a terror to all Europe. In the midst of these calamities and horrors, the spirit of the nation was never cast down, a voice was never raised to deprecate the hostile movements of the enemy, and, perhaps, no enactment of a legislature was ever received with more public satisfaction than that article of the constitution which declared that the Republic would not make peace with an enemy which occupied its territory*.

Energetic
spirit dis-
played.

* Article 127. Title, "Of the Connexion between the French Republic and Foreign Nations."

CHAP. LXXXIII.	<p>This feeling was general and unlimited; individuals who, in solitude, wept over the distracted and degraded state of the community, in public hailed with pleasure the lofty boasts with which small successes were announced and achievements of apparently remote utility proclaimed. Thus, the arrangement by an engineer named Chappe, for the speedy and correct transmission of intelligence, by means of a series of concerted signals, called a telegraph, was received with high and general satisfaction. It came to the Convention, recommended by a portion of their own body, called a committee of public instruction, which also bestowed great labour and essayed many philosophical experiments for a general equalization of the measures of weight, length, and capacity. A long report was presented; and, after much deliberation, a decree obtained for dividing money, weights, and measures into decimal parts; for which purpose a new division of space and time, and a new coinage were decreed; but the operation was necessarily postponed. For the benefit of the arts, this committee obtained a decree that a stipend of two thousand four hundred livres (£105) each should be allowed to twelve students to reside in Italy and Flanders, and the Royal Observatory in Paris was permanently established, with a change of its title to Observatory of the Republic. But in its great object, that of forming a system of public education, the committee entirely failed; all their efforts, and a vast number of debates and laborious reports, producing only a scheme for common charity schools to be established throughout the country, to teach reading, writing, arithmetic, and a republican catechism*.</p> <p>To meet the exigencies of their situation, the Convention formed a measure, bold, original, and, in its spirit and effect, notwithstanding some redundancies and puerilities, really sublime. The constitution declared that all the French people were soldiers, and to be exercised in the use of arms†; on this principle was</p>
1793.	
Telegraph.	
July 26.	
Change in weights and measures. Aug. 1.	
October 7.	
The arts.	
May 20 to Oct. 30. Public education.	
Military requisition.	

* See the Debates.

† Article 109.

founded a decree, that, until the expulsion of the enemy from the territory of the Republic, every Frenchman was in permanent requisition for the service of the armies; the young to take the field; married men to fabricate arms and convey supplies to the troops; women to prepare tents and clothing, and to assist in the hospitals; children were to be employed in scraping lint, and the old were to take stations in public places, to excite the courage of warriors, and to inculcate hatred of kings and the unity of the republic. Houses which had become national property were to be converted into barracks, the public squares into manufactories of arms, and the earth of cellars into a lixivium for the extraction of saltpetre. Fire-arms fit for service were to be given up for the use of the army; saddle horses, and those used for draught, except in agriculture, were to be taken for the use of the cavalry and the artillery. For the execution of this decree, extensive powers were given to the Committee of Public Safety, and to the deputies on mission*.

Before the passing of this great edict, other resolutions had been decreed, which bore an analogous, although not so commanding an aspect. To recruit, or rather to renew, the defeated and diminished armies, a levy of twelve hundred thousand soldiers had been ordered, and all medical men, between the ages of eighteen and forty, were placed in requisition. The levy was facilitated by the growing influence of the system of terror, and the consequent disdain of mere life, to be held without security or rational enjoyment. The love of glory, prevalent in the national character, was stimulated by a permission for every battalion to elect its own officers; but when they reached the frontiers, they found themselves destined to fill up the ranks of regiments reduced to skeletons; and he who had begun his march with the title of colonel, was but too happy, when he came into service, if he could obtain the rank of corporal†. A necessary degree of dis-

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1793.
Aug. 20.

August 1.

* *Moniteur* du 26 Aout, p. 1007, for the Report; 1009 for the Decree.

† *Lacréteille*, tome xi. p. 191.

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cipline was rapidly attained; the fabrication of arms was pursued with incessant perseverance; and the iron palisades, and other ornaments of public places, were torn down to afford materials. The search into private houses for earth imbued with nitrous matter was less productive, as a military resource, than instrumental to the views of private oppression; hidden property, papers, and all objects by which rapacity or vengeance could be gratified, were in reality sought for, under semblance of the general requisition.

August 13.
Carnot directs
military
affairs.

Carnot, who had recently been appointed a member of the Committee of Public Safety, took on himself, and executed most ably, the direction of warlike operations. He was of a respectable family, well-educated for military affairs, had served in the artillery corps, obtained the rank of captain and the cross of St. Louis before the revolution; he had been a member of the Constituent Assembly, where he always supported the popular cause, and, when that principle could be avowed, declared himself a staunch republican, and heartily joined in all the votes which sent the King to the scaffold. As a proof of his daring and impetuous spirit, it may be mentioned, that when he was sent on a mission to the army of the north, in this year, he superseded Gratien on the field when he was retreating before the enemy, and led the troops himself*.

March.

His election to the Committee of Public Safety had been accelerated, if not altogether occasioned, by the sensible and skilful advice which he had given for the conduct of the war. Anticipating that, after the capture of Mayence, the Prussians would make no daring movement, he directed that a great number of men should be drawn from the armies of the Rhine and Moselle, and, forming, with a body of the new levies, a force of sixty thousand men, sent with great expedition to attack and overwhelm the army of the Duke of York before Dunkirk. The orders transmitted to General Houchard declared that Pitt could only retain his power by indemnifying his country by

* Biographie des Hommes vivants, art. Carnot.

great successes, and if he failed in that particular, a revolution in England was inevitable.

Every thing appeared to favour the French. The English and Hanoverian army under the Duke of York, marching toward Menin, was joined by a body of Hessians and twelve thousand Austrians, under Field Marshal Alvinzy, making collectively thirty-six thousand men. Dunkirk was protected by three intrenched camps, containing seventeen thousand troops, whose number might be augmented by draughts from the neighbouring garrisons. A speedy movement, before the republicans could receive succours, would evidently have been of the first importance; but his Royal Highness, although eagerly desirous, could not make it, for want of a battering train, which he impatiently expected from England. This artillery not arriving, he divided his army into two corps; one of observation, under Field Marshal Freytag; the other of siege, commanded by himself. He took possession of a camp near Turcoin; and on the same day the hereditary Prince of Orange attacked the French posts at Mauvaix, Blaton, and Lincelles, of which he took the two latter. At one o'clock in the afternoon, however, the Republicans returned on Lincelles; and the hereditary Prince, having made great detachments of his force, was obliged to solicit succours from the British commander. Three battalions of guards were immediately sent, under General Lake; but, on their arrival, they found the enemy in possession of the place, the Dutch having been driven out in an opposite direction. Notwithstanding the great disparity of numbers and strength, the British troops attacked and drove the French from this strong position, through the village of Lincelles, taking fifty prisoners, with three hundred pieces of cannon, and leaving between two and three hundred killed and wounded.

Meanwhile, Marshal Freytag advanced to co-operate, defeating the Republicans at Oost Capelle, Rexpæde, and Hondschoote; the Duke marched from Furnes, and the allies took their ground within a league of Dunkirk; the French having, in their re-

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1793.
August 10.
Siege of Dunkirk.

18th August.
Battle of Lincelles.

Progress of the
siege.
20th.
22nd.

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1793.
23rd.

treat, cut the dyke between that city and Bergue, which enabled them to inundate great part of the country from the sea. After several skirmishes, the allies drove the Republicans into the town, which was summoned, and, on answering in terms of defiance, the siege was commenced ; but was very insufficiently conducted, for the Duke had no battering artillery, except guns taken from the ships ; and the intrenchments were opened in a moving sand, where water rose when they had dug two feet below the surface. This camp was spread over a great space, called L'Estrang, the right flank being covered by the sea, and its left by the marshes of St. Moer ; it did not afford even wholesome water, and all movements in it could be descried from the towers of Dunkirk. The enemy had, in the mean time, received their reinforcements from the armies of the Rhine and Moselle, and exchanged the garrison of three thousand men, of whose fidelity they were suspicious, for twelve thousand, on whom they could rely. Instead of the transports he so anxiously expected, the Duke had the mortification to witness the arrival of a flotilla of eight French gun vessels, and some others, which were brought to bear upon his camp, and battered it in an oblique direction.

Battle of
Hondschoote.
Sep. 5th.

6th.

8th.

The British
troops retreat.

While thus situated, the British commander learnt that General Houchard was advancing against his army of observation, and, on the next day, that he was engaging Marshal Freytag, at Rexpæde. The Marshal and Prince Adolphus*, wounded and for a short time prisoners, were rescued by Walmoden, and their troops, collected at Hondschoote, although under the protection of powerful batteries, were attacked and overwhelmed by the superior numbers of the French, and obliged to retreat upon Furnes.

During the fight at Hondschoote, the garrison of Dunkirk, by repeated attacks, prevented the Duke of York from sending any reinforcements ; his royal highness, securing the retreat of his army of observation, convoked a council of war in the night, and, in pursuance of their united decision that it would be

* Duke of Cambridge.

most injudicious to run the risk of being surrounded, merely to save their heavy and troublesome iron artillery, or such ammunition and stores as were collected, retreated the following day, and without impediment joined the other division at Furnes.

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1793.

9th.

Houchard, considering it vain to attack the Duke of York, who still commanded thirty-three thousand men, marched against the Dutch, whom he engaged at Menin, but without success; and just at the same period Quesnoi surrendered to General Clerfaye, after a siege of fourteen days.

11th.
Surrender of
Quesnoi.

These last events, although encouraging to the allies, bore no proportion to the retreat from Dunkirk, which in its consequences changed the aspect of the war, and decided the character of the campaign. The inaction of the Prince of Cobourg, and every other disaster, vanished from view when the failure at Dunkirk was contemplated*.

Effect of these
events.

After the surrender of Mayence, the combined armies in the neighbourhood of the Palatinate and Vosges remained in a state of inexplicable inaction. Amounting in force to one hundred thousand veteran soldiers, instead of making effectual assaults, as they might easily have done, on the enemy in either of those quarters, they contented themselves with establishing two armies to front those of the Republic, and, instead of active operations, spent their time in formal arrangements concerning the command. General Wurmser, who under the frost of age retained the fire and impetuosity of earlier years, commanded forty thousand men, including the corps of Condé. He saw with impatience the inaction of the Prussians, and proposed vigorous measures, which the Duke of Brunswick rejected as rash; and discussions began between the cabinets of Vienna and Berlin, which portended coldness and alienation from the common cause. Vainly did the gallant general make attacks on the French lines; they produced no effect but the shedding of

Inactivity of
the Prussians.

Disagreement
of the Austri-
ans and Prus-
sians

Aug. and Sept.

* Mémoires d'un Homme d'État, tome ii. p. 362. et seqq.; Lacrételle, tome xi. p. 72, et. seqq.; Victoires et Conquêtes, tome i. et ii.; and histories, periodical works, and dictionaries in general.

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1793.

Success of the
French.

Sept. 12.

In the Vosges.

They fail at
Pirmasens.
14th.

Negotiations.

22nd to 29th.
Departure of
the King of
Prussia.

blood; and to remonstrances from Wurmser, the answers of the Duke of Brunswick soon assumed a character of severity and harshness.

While thus the allied commanders fell into a state of disagreement, those of the Republic, acting under the immediate direction of the commissioners of the Convention, impelled by an enterprising spirit and vigorous unanimity, assumed the offensive, and began by attempting to cross the Rhine at two points, the one opposite to Kehl, the other at Fort Vauban. Both were unsuccessful; but the defeated republicans, falling back, assailed the Austrian corps of General Piaczewitz in the Vosges, forced his entrenchments, and pursued him as far as Bodenthal. The Duke of Brunswick, who had promised to support him, was himself attacked at Pirmasens, by twelve thousand men under General Moreaux*; but good intelligence having frustrated the hope of a surprise, Moreaux was defeated and driven back to Hornbach, with the loss of four thousand men, killed, wounded, and prisoners, and twenty-two pieces of artillery. Although this success elevated the spirits of the Prussian soldiery, no useful enterprise ensued. A series of negotiations took place, in which Lord Yarmouth, as ambassador from England, concluded subsidiary treaties with the courts of Hesse-Cassel and Hesse-Darmstadt, and, jointly with his brother, Lord Conway, made a remonstrance to the King of Prussia, which produced some apparent effect; and it was hoped that the Empress of Russia would be induced to adopt measures more decisive than hitherto.

At this period, the care of his interests in Poland induced Frederick William to leave the army. To give éclat to his departure, a general attack was made on the French lines, which, if productive of no important result, served at least to show how much had been lost by the omission of early, united, and well defined operations. His minister, the Marquis Lucchesini left an official note, declaring his Majesty's motives, and an-

* This general must not be confounded with the celebrated Moreau : he was, however, a brave and useful officer. See *Victoires et Conquêtes*, tome xxvi. p. 107.—*Homme d'État*, tome ii. p. 376.

nouncing that the command of the troops was confided to the Duke of Brunswick, and all political affairs to the ministry at Berlin.

After the departure of the King, the same languid system of warfare was pursued. Lord Yarmouth and General Wurmser urged an united attempt to force the lines between Weissembourg and Lauterbourg, which extended from the Rhine to the mountains of the Vosges; the French had occupied them four months and strengthened them with all the art of fortification. The Duke of Brunswick treated the operation as impracticable; but, vanquished, at length, by the urgent solicitations of Lord Yarmouth, he consented to a general attack. Contrary to his prognostications, the French were defeated at every point; Lauterbourg was evacuated and Weissembourg taken, and the Republicans made a precipitate and disorderly retreat toward Geisberg. The corps of French emigrants particularly distinguished themselves; but, owing to the hesitation of the Austrians, and the lukewarm operations of the Prussians, little advantage was derived from the exploit, and the enemy did not lose above a thousand men, where their whole army might have been destroyed. Haguenau opened its gates; but Wurmser, being then on his native soil, and in the midst of his patrimonial estates, yielded to the pleasure of establishing his head-quarters there, and permitted the disorganised and dispirited Republicans to seek refuge under the cannon of Strasbourg.

These successes imparted great satisfaction to the British ministry; and on the arrival of Lord Conway in London, with dispatches from Lord Yarmouth, hopes were entertained that more vigorous operations would be pursued, and the Duke of York was anxious to re-commence the siege of Dunkirk; but indolence, self-confidence, mutual distrust, diversity of views, and an anxious regard to the affairs of Poland, prevented the formation of any effectual plan. Efforts had been made to induce the Emperor to head his army; but the state of his own dominions, where every artifice

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1793.

Defeat of the
French at
Lauterbourg.

Oct. 13.

and Weissem-
bourg.

17th.
Haguenau
taken.

Discordant
views of the
allies.
21st.

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1793.
September.
Siege of Mau-
beuge raised.

had been used to sow discontents and excite commotions, rendered his presence in Vienna indispensable.

On the banks of the Sambre, the war assumed, for the moment, a more energetic character. In a council of war, the Duke of York and Lord Elgin had obtained a resolution to cross the river and take the intrenched camp which covered Maubeuge. The allies had one hundred and twenty thousand men, with an overwhelming artillery, in the country between Namur and the sea, while the troops opposed to them did not exceed one hundred thousand new recruits, ill-armed and scantily clad; but the enemy were in possession of many strong and well-fortified places, which obliged the allies to make numerous detachments. General Jourdan was commanded to make a great exertion for the relief of Maubeuge, and Carnot himself joined the army to superintend its operations. The French divisions collected at Avesnes, first encountered General Clerfaye in a slight cannonade; on the following day they made a more decisive attack on his whole line, between Barlaimont and Wattignies; but, after a severe contest, failed of success. In the night, Carnot received some private intelligence, and in the morning the republicans, favoured by a thick fog, attacked the Austrians at Wattignies; and, after a vigorous contest of eight and forty hours, in which they sustained great loss, the allied forces raised the siege of Maubeuge, and re-passed the Sambre. This precipitate retreat is much blamed, as the Duke of York, who, on the first summons had set forward in all haste to join the Austrians, arrived just as they had effected a retreat; his reinforcement would have been sufficient to change the fate of the day. The stress of the battle fell on General Clerfaye; the Prince of Cobourg, with his staff, remaining motionless the whole time. This failure, added to that before Dunkirk, was most injurious to the allies; their character declined in general estimation, while the republicans became used to war, and acquired that confidence in themselves which continued to be their characteristic.

14th.
15th.

16th.

About the same period, the French made an attack on Ypres, Menin, and Nieuport; but the Duke of York, having joined Sir Charles Grey in West Flanders, forced them to raise the siege of Nieuport, and to fall back upon Dunkirk, Cassel, Lille, and Douai. At Marchiennes, General Kray attacked the division which was in possession of the town; the vedettes were surprised, an obstinate contest was maintained in the streets during the darkness of night, and the result was the loss of three thousand men, of whom eighteen hundred laid down their arms.

Flushed with their success before Maubeuge, the Committee of Public Safety projected a winter campaign, and insisted that the invaders should be expelled from their territory. Acting under these directions, the army made considerable advances in Flanders, spread terror to Brussels and Ostend, and again formed the siege of Nieuport. The Duke of York, in this crisis, exerted great vigour and judgment in repelling the enemy; and, after a severe struggle, compelled them to abandon the projects they had formed against Menin, Ypres, and that side of Austrian Flanders. Nieuport was only protected from their approaches by inundation; and a detachment from the British fleet, under Admiral Macbride, arriving, they raised the siege, and retreated hastily in the night. They were afterwards driven from Furnes, and attacked in their posts at Ors and Chatillon sur Sambre. Marchiennes was taken by a detachment under Generals Kray and Otto, and Poperinghuc by a detachment from the garrison of Ypres under General Sallio, after many severe battles, in which little advantage was gained on either side. Yielding at length to the remonstrances of the commissioners and generals, the French government revoked their previous orders, and permitted the army to retire into winter quarters. A vast intrenched camp was formed near Guise, where General Jourdan fixed his head-quarters, to which the men levied by means of the requisition repaired in great numbers. The Prince of Cobourg, in like manner, placed his forces in cantonments in the neigh-

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1793.
23rd to 29th.
Siege of
Nieuport
raised.
25th.

Various other
actions.

29th.

31st.

29th Oct.

16th Nov.

The armies
retire into
winter-quar-
ters.

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1793.

Army of the
Moselle.

Strasbourg.

bourhood of Quesnoi, Valenciennes, and Condé; while the Duke of York established his head-quarters at Tournay, thus covering Flanders.

While the French army of the North was thus withdrawn from active operations, ten thousand men were drafted from it to reinforce that of the Moselle, which, together with that of the Rhine, was placed under the command of General Hoche. This officer, who had been one of the Gardes-françaises at the time of the revolution, and had secured his own elevation from the ranks by an extraordinary display of genius and talent, was now, in one day, advanced to the degree of Lieutenant-general and Commander-in-chief. After their success at the lines of Weissembourg, the allies were expected to attack Strasbourg, where a powerful party, weary of republican tyranny, were disposed to surrender the town, if possession were taken in the name of Louis the Seventeenth; but the arrangement being adverse to the views of Austria, Wurmser evaded giving a positive answer. He tried to induce the Duke of Brunswick to cut off the communication of the town with the French army; but the jealousy of Prussia at the aggrandizement of the Emperor, by the acquisition, which he evidently aimed at, of Lorraine and Alsace, avoided any effectual co-operation. Wurmser was defeated in an attack upon Saverne; the plot in Strasbourg was discovered; seventy of the principal agents suffered death; St. Just and Le Bas, commissioners from the Convention, established in all its rigour the system of terror; Wurmser, mortified at seeing his dearest connexions in the city subject to republican persecution, cast the blame on the Duke of Brunswick; recriminations followed, but the city was placed beyond the reach, or even the hopes, of the allies.

Nov. 19.
Wurmser
takes Fort
Louis.

As a feeble compensation for the failure at Strasbourg, Wurmser took Fort Louis, after a fortnight's siege, and permitted himself to hope for the cordial co-operation of the Prussian army, now commanded by the Prince Royal, and engaged in the bombardment of Landau, considered as the bulwark of Alsace.

In confident expectation that the views of the Emperor would now be realized, he addressed a proclamation to the Alsatians, adjuring them to throw off the dominion of France, and reunite themselves to the Empire, conformably, as he said, to the treaty of Westphalia. During his absence in Poland, certain counsellors, who surrounded Frederick William, displayed to him the dangerous views of the Emperor; and the disputes between the Duke of Brunswick and General Wurmser completed the dissolution of those ties which, for three years, had united him to Austria. The King's political opinions were communicated to the Duke of Brunswick; and an attack upon Bitche having failed, the bombardment of Landau was discontinued, and he began a retreat toward Pirmasens, a measure which increased the peril of the Austrians, by uncovering their right.

So extended was the front of the combined armies, that it became easy to penetrate their centre, and a retreat of the Austrians was subjected to additional difficulties from their having a river in their rear. Hoche, having received an additional re-inforcement from the army of the Ardennes, resolved to push a strong body through the Austrian centre, and so to relieve Landau. Under these circumstances, the Duke of Brunswick fell back on Erbach, and Wurmser was obliged, in like manner, to withdraw upon the Lauter. The Duke having taken the formidable position of Kaiserslautern, Hoche attacked him on three successive days, and on each was repulsed with appalling slaughter. Far from censuring this apparent prodigality of human life, Carnot continued to supply him with reinforcements, and he turned his whole force against Wurmser, who was at the time also attacked by an officer, new at that day, but afterward well recorded in the annals of France, General Pichegru. The Austrian General maintained his position with skill and bravery; but no signal success could be claimed by either party. When apprized of the junction of Hoche with Pichegru, Wurmser applied for reinforcements to Vienna, but in vain; nor were his remonstrances

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1793.

25th.
Views of the
Emperor on
Alsace.
Distasteful to
Prussia.

Retreat of the
Duke of
Brunswick.

28th to 30th.
Battles at Kai-
serslautern.

Dec. 1, 4, & 8.

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1793.

18th.

22nd.

Hoche's Vic-
tory at
Frescheveiler.

to the Duke of Brunswick attended with better results. After much uncheering correspondence, a general attack, which was meditated, was prevented by a dreadful storm; but Hoche, undeterred by any obstacles, sallied from the Vosges, with the army of the Moselle, and attacked the reserve of the Palatine and Bavarian troops, Werdt and Frescheveiler. The Emperor, with great difficulty, had obtained their junction with his army on the Rhine, and on the firing of the first cannon, they took to flight. Favoured by a thick fog, and judiciously varying his attacks, Hoche made himself master of several redoubts; the Imperialists, defeated on every side, retreated in confusion and disorder. Their distress was completed by a personal altercation, on the very field, between the two generals, and by the desertion of more than twenty thousand Alsatians, who had been allured by the proclamation to join the Austrian army, but now fled to avoid the vengeance which they anticipated from the triumphant republicans.

24th.

Austrians
retreat,
26th.

Completely dispirited, the Imperial army hastily retreated to an intrenched camp at Geisberg, behind Weissenbourg; Hoche pursued, and assailed them with his whole force, animated with enthusiasm, cheered by success, singing patriotic songs, and using as a war cry, "Landau or death." The Austrians, exhausted by thirty-six battles, fought in the course of forty days, dispirited by disunion and adverse events, defended themselves but feebly; in vain did their heroic old General place himself twice at the head of the cavalry to lead the onset; twice was he deserted in the heat of a terrible discharge of artillery. Indignant and heart-broken, Wurmser retreated beyond the Rhine, under Philipsbourg and Mannheim, without apprising the Duke of Brunswick of his intention. Left thus alone, on the left bank of the Rhine, the Prussians fell back toward Mayence, without any considerable annoyance. The republicans, besides the recapture of Landau, which re-established their dominion in Alsace, gained an immense booty in artillery, warlike stores, and provisions, together with plate and treasure to a large

30th.

amount. The moral effect of this campaign was incalculable. The allies were defeated and disgraced ; the French, who at the beginning of the year had been deemed insecure in their very existence, were now proudly triumphant, prepared and animated to aim at the conquest, by arms and by revolutionary principles, of the whole continent*.

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On the Spanish frontier the war was not conducted with much vigour. The King of that country had no great means of making military exertion, and, as he had taken up arms in resentment of the murder of his relative only, he really had in view no discernible ultimate object. The republicans, fully occupied in other quarters, opposed to him forces inadequate to any extensive operation. The exploits performed on each side merit the praise of gallantry, and the Spanish generals, Ricardo, Las Amarillas, and Cuesta, shewed a military talent which was well supported by the bravery of their troops. In the eastern Pyrennees, the campaign, or more properly the year, was concluded by a valiant struggle, which left the Spaniards conquerors, and in possession of Saint Elmo, Port Vendre, and Collioure. Don Ventura Caro had concluded his campaign in the western Pyrennees at an earlier period. Having stripped and razed the fort of Hendaye, the Spaniards formed small camps on the mountain of Louis the Fourteenth, which the French took and burnt, attaching much more celebrity to the action than its real importance could warrant. Servan was removed, and sent prisoner to Paris, being succeeded by Delbecq and Labourdonnaye. The division under Delbecq was employed in skirmishes, while Labourdonnaye was preparing for a greater attempt : but both generals dying at nearly the same period, the command of the whole force devolved on Desprez Crassier. He endeavoured to surprise all the positions of the Spani-

Campaign in
the Eastern
Pyrennees.

Dec. 22.

July and
August.

* In shortly describing these events, I have principally followed the account given in the *Mémoires d'un Homme d'Etat*, tom. ii. the author of which adds, to a competent knowledge of military affairs, a thorough acquaintance with the Imperial and Prussian cabinets. I have also not omitted to consult the histories and journals ; *Victoires et Conquêtes* ; and other authorities.

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Aug. 29.War in
Sardinia.

ards, but, being foiled in his attempt, was removed from the command and sent prisoner to Paris. The remainder of the campaign produced no event worthy of commemoration*.

In Sardinia, or, as the French called it, the maritime Alps, they were uniformly successful. Their exploits were not considerable, but planned with judgment, and executed with bravery. Massena, whose name became afterward highly celebrated, distinguished himself in engagements at Utello, Castel Gineste, and Le Brecq, which rendered the Austro-Sardinian army incapable of undertaking any other enterprize during the campaign, left the French in a highly advantageous position, and, as Massena expressed it in his dispatch to the Convention, stamped on their arms the seal of victory†.

Oct. 22.
Nov. 24.War in La
Vendée.

While thus combating their external foes, the Convention had a more momentous labour in quelling internal insurrections. La Vendée, it has been well observed by one of the members of the legislature, was, with giant feet trampling down the infant republic; the success of the royalists had been rapid and astounding; their purpose, the restoration of their King and their religion, was defined and avowed; and in many parts of France, as well as beyond the frontier, they had numerous friends; but, even among those who appeared to have embarked in the same cause, unanimity did not prevail. Some of the cities and districts in France desired only the constitution of the first assembly; and the foreign powers, by avoiding any explicit declaration, by their conduct toward the emigrants, and by the terms of capitulation which they allowed to the towns which they took, contributed to the downfall of these brave insurgents. The garrisons of Valenciennes, Condé, and Mayence, experienced in war, firm in principle, and enraged by defeat, were, immediately after their surrender, employed

* Victoires et Conquêtes, tom. i. et ii.—Mémoires sur la dernière Guerre entre la France et l'Espagne.

† Moniteur du 12 Décembre, 1793, p. 328. The whole dispatch is worth reading, as a curious specimen of the vaunting style in which plain facts were invested.

in La Vendée, and aided, animated, and instructed the undisciplined levies supplied by the Convention. Factions began to prevail in the royal and catholic army ; several leaders entertained distinct views on the conduct of the war, and thwarted and counteracted each other. Decrees of tremendous ferocity were passed by the Convention, and the exertions of their troops, especially after the arrival of the garrisons, sustained their cause in several eventful battles and well-conducted sieges and surprises. Three of the principal leaders, D'Elbée, Bonchamp, and Lescure, were mortally wounded in a battle under the walls of Challet. The Prince De Talmont and D'Autichamp, considering that their army could not maintain itself on the left bank of the Loire, and that it would be most prudent to cross that river, in order to march to Paris, or, in case of defeat, to gain some sea-port in Brittany and request foreign assistance, effected the passage in three days, with a force of thirty thousand men. Pursued alike by the decrees and the troops of the Convention, in want of ammunition and provisions, the Prince formed the bold and dangerous resolution of pushing forward to gain a position on the coast, where he might receive succours from England ; but being threatened on all sides by the republicans, and in danger of being surrounded, receiving no intelligence of the expected aids, the royalists again decamped for the interior, hoping to find relief and a rallying point from which they might issue under more favourable auspices. Their disappointment was not occasioned by any neglect of the British ministry ; on the contrary, every exertion was made to afford them succour, and the Earl of Moira, with ample supplies, arrived off the coast in eight days after their departure. He repeated his signals, and renewed his efforts in vain, and, after near a month's expectation, was obliged to return to England*.

Finally, the royal army received a total overthrow at

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Nov. 23.

Expedition
under Lord
Moira.

Dec. 1.

Defeat of the
insurgents at
Mans.
Nov. 11.

* See Lord Moira's narrative of the transaction; Debates of the British House of Lords, 14th February, 1794.—Also, Mémoires of Madame de la Rochejaquelein; Victoires et Conquêtes, tom. i. et ii. passim. ; and the Histories.

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1793.

Barbarity of
the victors.

Mans. They had advanced, in hopes of surprising the town; but their approach being anticipated, their whole army was put to the rout; no quarter given, and the massacre was computed at eighteen thousand men. A remnant endeavoured to gain the friendly territory of La Vendée; but they were pursued by the republicans under Kleber and Westermann, and, after a conflict of two days, again defeated, with similar slaughter, at Savenay. Nothing now remained for the victors, but to secure the conquered departments against future insurrections, which they sought to effect by burning habitations, and indiscriminate slaughter. Carrier was on mission at Nantes, and his unrelenting barbarities rendered his name atrociously celebrated, and formed a stigma on the revolution. The prisons were filled by false denunciations; military tribunals erected, which condemned without the appearance of trial; and the guillotine being found too slow for the savage purposes of rapid execution, the shooting of whole detachments, and drowning of hundreds by means of a barge with a false bottom, were put in practice, and known by the names of Fusillades and Noyades*.

Marseilles.

Marseilles, in common with Aix, Lambesc, Arles, Terascon, and other towns in the south, had revolted against the Convention, and refused to accept the new constitution; but their views were not so clear and direct as those of the inhabitants of La Vendée. They were spontaneously resisted by the republicans in their own neighbourhood, and particularly at Avignon. A portion of the army of the Alps, under Carteaux, speedily reduced the insurgents to submission; and the horrors exercised in La Vendée renewed (they could not be exceeded) at Bordeaux, under the exterminating ferocity of Barras, Robespierre junior, Freron, and Salicetti, aided by the experience and unrelenting barbarity of Jourdan, le coupe-tête. Marseilles would have exhibited similar scenes, but that Tallien, the deputy on mission, from whose character every thing

* From Turreau's *Histoire de la Guerre de la Vendée*, and the Debates of the Convention.

dreadful was to be apprehended, was taken in the nets of love, and, engaged in making addresses to a beautiful and humane lady, yielded to her impulses, and left the sword of revolutionary vengeance comparatively but little stained*.

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Lyons presented an aspect of formidable resistance and desperate energy: the Convention refusing to offer any terms of compromise, Kellermann invited the inhabitants to throw open their gates and join in confederation with his troops, but in vain; and a proclamation by Dubois Crancé and Gautier was equally ineffectual. The bombardment being commenced, and the city closely invested, famine was severely felt; corruption found its way within the walls, and treasons discovered and punished only increased alarm and mistrust. Amidst difficulties hourly increasing, the resistance was maintained nearly two months; and General Doppet, who arrived from the army of the Alps to command the siege, was preparing to make a last attack, when the people opened their gates and surrendered at discretion. General Précý, at the head of two thousand five hundred men, and escorting many women and children, made his escape; but an ammunition waggon being blown up, occasioned great destruction among his helpless followers; the country was raised, and the fugitives pursued by their enemies; the whole detachment was put to the sword.

Lyons.

Aug. 14.

29th.

Oct. 8.

A decree passed the Convention for razing all the buildings, except the abodes of the poor, of murdered patriots, and houses of industry and public instruction. On the site a column was to be raised, with an inscription, "Lyons warred against liberty—Lyons is no more;" and its name was changed to Ville Affranchie. As a means of exciting the Jacobins to relentless revenge, the remains of Challier were brought to view, and worshipped, like those of his political preceptor, Marat; Robespierre pronounced his eulogy in the Jacobin club at Paris, and Dorfeuille at Lyons.

12th.

* Victoires et Conquêtes, tom. i. p. 233; Prud'homme, tom. v.; Dictionnaire des Hommes marquans, art. Tallien.

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14th.

Nov. 10.

Collet D'Herbois, Montaut, and Fouché, were deputed by the Jacobins to accelerate the measures of cruelty, and, under their auspices, a fête was performed to the memory of the republican martyr. As part of this impious ceremony, an ass, covered with a priest's vestments, having on his head a mitre, and the volumes of holy writ tied to his tail, paraded the streets; the remains of Challier were then burnt, and the ashes distributed among his admirers, while the books were also consumed, and the ashes scattered in the wind. It was proposed to terminate the ceremony by murdering all the prisoners; but a sudden storm drove the people to their houses. No time was, however, lost in forwarding the work of destruction; the missionaries boasted to the Convention of their inflexibility; they required the explosion of mines, and the rapidity of flame, to gratify their desires of extermination; and the Convention received with coldness a petition for mercy from the inhabitants of this large, beautiful, and rich city, referring it to the Committee of Public Safety, which had ordered their destruction*.

Toulon
besieged.Ollioules
taken.

Sept. 6.

Nor less decided was the success, nor less sanguinary the vengeance, of the republicans at Toulon, the siege of which, after the surrender of Marseilles, was entrusted to General Carteaux, whose army was augmented by a levy en masse of the southern provinces. In his progress, a portion of his force was defeated at Ollioules by a part of the garrison under Sir George Keith Elphinstone. Lord Mulgrave arriving, and being invested provisionally with the command of the troops, proposed evacuating this post; but, before he could execute his intention, it was attacked by five thousand French, who drove out the allies, in number only four hundred, but with no great loss. The garrison was far too small for the defence of the place, although reinforced by three thousand Spaniards from the army of Roussillon, and bodies of Sardinians and Neapolitans. The protection of Toulon de-

* See Prud'homme, tom. vi.; Histories; Victoires et Conquêtes, tom. ii. p. 56.—Also, see Moniteur, An. ii. No. 51, 64, 180, 204; and for the whole matter, well condensed, see *Revue Chronologique*, p. 211, et seq.

pended on the power of retaining a great number of positions, which could only be done by an ample provision of force, which it was found impossible to collect. Hence the duty was excessively fatiguing, and the affairs of posts frequent and bloody. Lord Mulgrave, with great intrepidity, gained the heights of La Grasse, where a fort was established, called, in honour of the noble commander, by his name. The enemy, in hopes of annoying the shipping in the harbour, occupied the heights of Pharon, from which they were dislodged by a body of British, Spanish, and Sardinian troops, after a severe action, which lasted the whole day.

The surrender of Lyons, and great draughts from the army of Italy, increasing the force of the besiegers to upwards of thirty thousand men, affairs of posts became more and more frequent. Terror and treachery began to operate among the inhabitants, and jealousies prevailed among the allied troops in the garrison. In this discouraging situation, Lieut.-General O'Hara, arriving with a reinforcement from Gibraltar, took on himself the command, being invested, jointly with Lord Hood and Sir Gilbert Elliot, with a directorial commission. About the same time, Carteaux and Lapoype were removed from the command of the republican army, which was for a short time intrusted to Doppet, and afterward to Dugommier.

But not to them was the further success of the siege to be attributed: there came, dispatched from Paris by the Committee of Public Safety, a young officer, at that time the chief of a battalion, but now appointed second in command of the besieging artillery. He was at the period unknown, but destined afterward to occupy the attention of all mankind; to unsettle governments, and to rule the destiny of nations—it was Napoléon Bonaparte. His star, afterwards so tremendously refulgent, then first glittered above the horizon. His judgment reformed the errors which prevailed in the conduct of the siege, dissipating the illusions of pride and ignorance in the commanders, and his genius projected measures which led to ultimate triumph.

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1793.

Sept. 20.

Oct. 1.

October.
Arrival of
Gen. O'Hara.

And of Napo-
léon Bona-
parte.

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Invitation to
Monsieur.Correspond-
ence with the
British Com-
missioners.

In Toulon, the prevailing spirit was that of loyalty to the family of their murdered sovereign. The people, by public acts, had recognized the constitutional monarchy in the person of Louis the Seventeenth; and during his minority called to the regency his uncle, styled Monsieur; and, by an address, intreated and urged him to come among them and establish himself in that quality. The prince, joyfully accepting this invitation, quitted Westphalia and repaired to Turin; but there, for political reasons, his own father-in-law prevented him from embarking. The inhabitants of Toulon were divided in opinion; the sections sent a deputation to the English and Spanish Generals, declaring their wish to return to their ancient form of government, and to recall the emigrants, their bishop, their ancient administration, and the regent. It was answered that a subject involving such extensive and complicated political relations could only be discussed directly with all the allied courts. One city, isolated from the rest of France, could not regulate the whole kingdom; the British ministers were not competent to decide on the proposed measure without consulting their court, and obtaining explicit powers; nor could they commit their sovereign on the question of regency, or sanction the presence of Monsieur as required, because it would deprive the King of England, before the time stipulated, of the authority with which he had been intrusted.

30th.
Declaration of
the English
government.

In a few days, the Commissioners imparted a declaration from the British government, in which his Majesty, confirming the promises made by Lord Hood on taking possession of the town, stated that, when monarchy should be restored in France, and a treaty of peace concluded, stipulating, in favour of His Majesty and his allies, the restitution of all conquests made by France during the war, a just indemnification for the losses and expenses incurred, and a proper security for the future, he would cause Toulon, together with the ships and stores, to be restored. "His Majesty," the declaration proceeded, "sincerely wishes the happiness of France; but by no means desires, on this account,

“to prescribe any particular form of government. The King claims the right of taking a part, only because the anarchy which now desolates that country threatens the tranquillity of his own subjects, and that of the other powers of Europe whose safety and peace materially depend on the re-establishment of order in France, and of a regular system, which may hold out to them a secure ground of negotiation and friendship: and his Majesty does not hesitate to declare that the re-establishment of monarchy, in the person of Louis the Seventeenth, the lawful heir of the Crown, appears to him the best mode of accomplishing these just and salutary views. Such a system, subject to modifications hereafter made in a regular and legal manner, when tranquillity shall have been restored in France, would afford the best and most pleasing prospect of terminating present evils and miseries, and of renewing a regular and amicable intercourse between France and other states*.”

Under the direction of Dugommier, guided by Bonaparte, a masked battery of eight twenty-four pounders and four mortars, was erected on the heights of Arenes, to open upon fort Malbosquet, which a body of the garrison was directed to take. In this they succeeded: but, unmindful of the instructions they had received, descended the hill in pursuit of the enemy, and gained other distant heights; Dugommier rallied, drove them back, repossessed the fort, and General O'Hara, being wounded in the right arm, was taken prisoner, and sent to Paris†. A general attack was now threatened, and the allies were compelled to relinquish some of their posts; new batteries continued to be erected by the French, who also took the heights of La Grasse, Fort Mulgrave, and, finally, the commanding eminences of Pharon.

The town and inner road being now completely commanded, the allies found it impossible longer to

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Progress of
the siege.

General O'Hara
taken prisoner.

9th December
to 17th.

Progress of
the besiegers.

17th.
Toulon evacuated.

* Mémoires d'un Homme d'État, tom. ii. p. 418; Rivington's Annual Register, 1793, p. 317.

† Bonaparte's account of this action is in "A Voice from St. Helena," by Barry O'Meara, vol. i. p. 203.

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maintain their position ; the troops were withdrawn from several of the posts, the Neapolitans retiring in the night, and without orders, to their ships. As many Royalists as could be received sought safety on board the merchant vessels in the harbour, which were to be provisioned by the allies ; but the general confusion frustrated the plan.

18th.

These measures were arranged in a council of war, and the next day the sick and wounded and the field artillery were sent off ; the whole town was in confusion, the Jacobins fired from their windows on the royalists and retreating troops ; the quay was crowded with persons of all ages and both sexes, imploring to be received on board boats, which were already crowded to sinking, and the lives of six thousand were saved by the allies.

Burning of the
fleet and arse-
nal.

All the French ships ready for sea had sailed under Admiral Trogoffe, a steady royalist ; and the destruction of the remainder, with the stores, was resolved in council, though known to be repugnant to the opinion of the Spanish Admiral, who had declared the annihilation of the French navy to be no less hostile to the interests of Spain than congenial to those of Great Britain. To avoid offending this suspicious and punctilious ally, the destruction of the vessels and stores in the inner harbour was committed to Admiral Langara, while Sir Sydney Smith volunteered his services to superintend the conflagration in other parts. Having completed his preparations, the British Captain, in defiance of numerous dangers, placed his combustibles, moored a fire ship in a proper direction, and, at an appointed signal, involved the ships and store-houses in flame. The Spaniards, in their eagerness, set fire to two powder ships, instead of scuttling them, as had been agreed. The explosion of these vessels added greatly to the horrors of the scene, and for a moment endangered the British boats, though a beneficial effect was, on the whole produced, by the alarm it created among the republicans. The Spaniards also failed in firing the ships in the bason before the town, reporting it to be impracticable : the English, on attempting it,

found it was become really so, by the increased force of the republicans, which would prevent their cutting the boom across the bason. Having exhausted his combustibles, and the strength of his brave followers, Sir Sydney retired to the fleet, having first secured every man who had been landed to protect this extraordinary enterprise. The moment the rear of the allied army quitted the town, the republicans entered, and began immediately to glut their fury on the stragglers and the royalists: many were pursued into the sea; and some, getting on board boats, even without oars, followed the fleet to escape the knives of the assassins.

The general loss of the French was not so great as at first represented; the grand magazine on shore was not set on fire, but only some smaller buildings; the principal damage fell on the shipping, and that would have been greater, but for the negligence or treachery of the Spaniards. Three ships of the line and twelve frigates were brought into English harbours, and nine ships of the line were burnt by Sir Sydney Smith. The Sardinians took possession of one frigate, the Neapolitans and Spaniards of two sloops; two frigates used as powder magazines were blown up, one frigate ashore was burnt by the Sardinians, and two corvettes by the English*.

Intelligence of this event was received in the Convention with unbounded exultation; a grand fête, in celebration of the victories of the republic was planned by David, the painter-legislator, and attended by the Convention and constituted authorities: it formed a medley of grandeur and meanness, solemnity and frivolity. Had these exuberant exultations been the only, or even the principal, displays of national character produced by this great event, no severity of animadversion would have been called for, but the barbarous rigour with which the vanquished were visited

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24th Dec.
Grand fête in
Paris.
30th.

Cruelty of the
Committee.

* For all these particulars, see the *Gazettes*; and *Rose's Naval History of the late War*, vol. i. p. 14, et seq.; *Victoires et Conquêtes*, tom. ii. p. 155, et seq.; *Lacretelle*, tom. xi. p. 180 et seq. and *Journal of the Private Life, &c. of Napoléon* at St. Helena, by Las Cases, vol. i. p. 138, English translation; *Gourgaud*, vol. i. p. 9 to 29, and 313 to 333.

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adds to the horrible features of the times, and helps to fill up the measure of disgust and abhorrence. "The scene of combat being concluded," one of their own historians observes, "that of tortures began. The Committee of Public Safety issued atrocious orders; Barras and Fréron shewed themselves their willing instruments. How easy would it have been for them to say: 'All the guilty have fled, and we have found in Toulon none but faithful patriots, or men who, having been subdued by fear, now anxiously desire to be Frenchmen again.' But Barras and Fréron established military commissions, peopled the prisons, and, as if all the chiefs of the insurrection had been in their power, by musquetry and by grape shot destroyed, exterminated more than eight hundred people." The details of the executions shew that savage vindictiveness was not unmixed with furtive rapacity*.

* Lacrételle, tome ii. p. 188. Other writers carry the number of human beings sacrificed to a much higher number. In the executions above-mentioned, crowds of victims were collected in a square or public place; soldiers dispatched them with musket shots, or with grape from cannon; the first mode they termed a fusillade, the other a mitraille.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTY-FOURTH.

1793—1794.

Hatred of the French to England.—Decree for seizing neutral vessels.—Order in Council.—Arrest of foreigners in France.—Fury against Mr. Pitt.—Prohibition of English merchandizes.—Arrest of British subjects.—The King's declaration.—Capture of Tobago—St. Pierre and Miquelon.—Failure at Martinique.—Attempt on St. Domingo—state of the island—the English invited.—India.—Chandernagore, Karical, and Yanam taken.—Siege of Pondicherry—capitulation proposed—answer—deputation.—Naval actions—La Cleopatra and la Nympe—the Boston and the Ambuscade—the Crescent and La Réunion—capture of the Thames frigate.—Treaties with Spain for preventing supplies to France—with Naples, Russia, Austria, and Portugal.—Intent of those treaties.—Observations.—Dissatisfaction of minor powers with England.—Dunkirk.—West Indies.—Toulon.—Affair of the San Jago.—Proceedings in Sardinia—Naples—Tuscany—Genoa—Sweden—America.—M. Genet sent as minister.—Disposition of the Americans—conduct of Washington—arrival and conduct of Genet—his reception by Washington.—Aggressions of the French.—Remonstrances of the British minister—their effect.—Anger of Genet—his proceedings checked—his violent remonstrance.—Cases of Hanfield and Singletary.—Prudent conduct of the Americans.—Genet forms clubs.—Publications.—Commercial regulations of France.—Order in Council.—Case of the Little Cherub.—Disputes with Great Britain—Boundary question—Impressment of seamen—Speech of Washington to Congress.—Truce between Por-

tugal and Algiers.—American armament. —Acts of party—intelligence from England—Democrats and federals.—England—Proceedings on Sedition — Societies—Prosecutions for publications—for seditious words—John Frost's case —Breillatt — William Winterbotham —Eaton—Lambert, Perry, and Grey.—Observations.—London Corresponding Society—joined by Societies in Scotland and Ireland.—Edinburgh Convention—their proceedings — interference of the magistracy — arrest of members—a meeting dissolved—another dispersed.—Prosecutions for libellous publications.—Trial of Muir.—Society at Dundee.—Trial of Fyshe Palmer. — Trials of Skirving, Margarot, and Gerrald.

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Hatred of the
French to
England.

AMONG all the enemies which France had created to herself, England was the least exposed to her arms, and the most distinguished by her abuse. Whatever business was proceeding, whatever plan of domestic economy or foreign warfare in pursuit, an opportunity was found to vent expressions of accusation, hatred, or contempt against the government, the King, or the minister of England. Whoever incurred the censure of any party in the Convention, whether politician or general, rebel or foreign enemy, was the agent, the tool, or the confederate of England; and Pitt's policy and Pitt's guineas were the subjects of daily declamation, and used alike against all parties. A remarkable specimen occurs in the act of accusation against Brissot and his adherents, where twelve paragraphs are expended in shewing that, in the designs of Pitt to dishonour France, to vilify and dissolve the Convention, to assassinate its most faithful deputies, such as Pelletier and Marat, to destroy Paris, to arm all Europe against the republic, to ruin their armies by means of treacherous generals, to dismember the country, or to place the crown on the head of the Duke of York, to lose the colonies and to menace every coast with English ships and English guineas, had been the unvarying effort of Pitt, in which he had been faithfully

aided by Brissot and the other defendants*. Little force or effect can be ascribed to such absurd railings, especially when it is recollected that similar charges were made, although not in so much detail, against the Duke of Orléans, and every one who incurred the hatred of the Jacobins; and that they were retorted in a manner equally violent and unsparing by their antagonists, who did not hesitate to propound similar charges against Robespierre, Marat, Anacharsis Clootz, and all to whom they were personally opposed†. They proved nothing in matter of fact, but served to exasperate the people to whom they were addressed.

Nor was the expression of ill-will confined to these publications. A decree passed the Convention authorizing their vessels to seize and carry into the ports of the republic all neutral vessels loaded with merchandize, even were it virtually bound to an enemy's port. This decree was met by an order of the English council, declaring all the ports of France in a state of blockade, and making all neutral vessels, carrying provisions into them, lawful prize. On a report made by Barrère, it was decreed that all foreigners, natives of countries with which France was at war, and not domiciled before the fourteenth of July, 1789, should be arrested, and seals put on their effects; and further, that all who should deposit any money or other property in the counting-houses or banks of those countries should be guilty of treason.

Although, in the wording of these decrees, there was an appearance of generality, their chief intent was obviously against the commerce and navigation of England; but subsequent acts and declarations were too particular and personal to admit of any doubt or explanation. In the report of Barrère, on the loss of towns already alluded to, after denouncing to the people of England, and to the whole world, the cowardly, treacherous, and atrocious manœuvres of the English government, that new tactical system of

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Decree for
seizing neutral
vessels.

May 9th.

June 8th.
Order in Coun-
cil.

Arrest of
foreigners in
France.
Aug. 1.

2nd.

Fury against
Mr. Pitt.

* *Moniteur* du 27 Octobre, 1793

† *Appel à l'impartiale Posterité*, par la Citoyenne Roland; *Le Recit de mes Périls*, par Louvet; &c. &c.

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offence and crime which Pitt had added to the scourge of war, the infamous corruption which he had introduced even into the sanctuary of the laws, into camps and cities, and even into the free communications of commerce and of hospitality: "Let the people of England," he proceeded, "at length open their eyes to the wild and atrocious maxims of their government, and tremble. A day will come when the people of Europe, alarmed at the commercial tyranny, the political despotism, and the extreme corruption of the English government, will realise the wish of Cato, by pronouncing that the modern Carthage shall be destroyed. What will she do, when all the nations of Europe shall cry 'Let us break the sceptre of the queen of the seas, let them be free as the land*!'"

Aug. 7th.

On another occasion, when a destructive fire had taken place in the arsenal of Huningen, and a scarcity prevailed in Paris, the Convention passed a law sentencing to death all persons taken in the disguise of patrols, or in women's clothes. When this had been decreed, Garnier des Saintes said, "There never was a time when vigorous measures were more necessary against those who wish to destroy France by fire. They are put in motion by Pitt; but that rascal shall suffer the penalty of his crime: he shall pay with his life for the crimes he has planned. Yes, I declare, that a man will be found, sufficiently the friend of humanity, a new Scævola, who would rid the world of this monster. I say that every man has a right to assassinate him who has projected the assassination of all mankind. I move then a decree that Pitt is the enemy of the human race, and that every man has a right to assassinate him." This murderous proposition occasioning violent murmurs, Couthon mitigated the decree, by leaving out the assassination clause, and merely voting Mr. Pitt the enemy of the human race. But, although Garnier did not succeed to the whole verbal extent of his first

Sept. 6th.

motion, he gained some satisfaction, by obtaining a decree for the immediate imprisonment of all foreigners born in the territories of the powers at war with France, and for the execution, as conspirators, of all who should arrive after publication of the decree. This was followed by an attempt to make all bankers produce their books, that it might be seen whether the agents of Pitt and Cobourg had made deposits, and that they might be confiscated ; but it was referred back to the committee, and the measure does not seem to have been carried into execution.

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7th.

In a month afterward, intelligence was received from Toulon relating to the execution of a representative of the people, who was taken and convicted as a spy. Odet, the writer of the letter, just at the time when twenty-one Brissotine members were sent to the scaffold in one day, declared that it made his heart swell with fury, he was inspired with a horror, in which he was sure the Convention would participate ; they would shudder to think of a representative of the people being doomed to death like a vile malefactor, and he declaimed vehemently against the impious and barbarous hordes of ferocious English, who respected nothing. So great was his detestation of the whole nation, that with his own hands he could tear the heart of the last survivor of them. Barrère, after the reading of this epistle, observed that England was making a deadly war against liberty ; they must make reprisals on her commerce. Such was her avarice, that she would feel the loss of her trade more sensibly than the acquisition of an empire. An embargo on the shipping was not sufficient ; a positive interdiction of the manufactures of England would strike a more direct blow. The real people of England, the workmen and artizans, would then behold in George and in Pitt the real author of their woes, and deliver the earth of those monsters. Without opposition, he obtained decrees proscribing, throughout the territories of France, all merchandizes produced or made in England, Scotland, and Ireland, or any place subjected to the British government. Persons directly or

Oct. 9—10.

Prohibition of
English mer-
chandize.

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1793.

Arrest of
British
subjects.

indirectly importing, introducing, selling, purchasing, or permitting the introduction of them, were to be imprisoned in irons for twenty years; persons wearing or using such merchandizes were to be classed among the suspected; and all who were already in possession of them were to transmit inventories, and the proper authorities to take the goods into their possession, the parties receiving a promise of a regulated price, payable at an undefined period. In aid of this measure, and as a further expression of implacable hostility, it was decreed, on the motion of Robespierre, that all English, Scotch, Irish, Hanoverian, and other subjects of the King of Great Britain, of both sexes, and in whatever part of the republic, should immediately be put in arrest, seals placed on their papers, and their property confiscated*.

These violent proceedings shew the extreme ferocity of hate against England which animated the rulers of the republic; and they are intitled to notice, as, in a subsequent period, this arrest of men and women residing in France, under promises of protection and hospitality, was followed as a precedent, and as the Report of Barrère formed the basis of what was termed the Continental system.

Oct. 29.
The King's
declaration.

On the part of Great Britain, the King issued a declaration to explain his views, to repel unjust accusations, and to conciliate, if possible, some portion of the French nation, inflamed and deceived by their rulers. His objects in the war were, to repel an unprovoked aggression, to contribute to the immediate defence of his allies, to obtain for them and for himself a just indemnification, and to provide, as far as circumstances would allow, for the future security of his own subjects, and of all the other nations of Europe. After some observations on the apparent circumstances of the war, and the proceedings of France, for the avowed purpose of subverting all the institutions of society, his Majesty declared that he did not dispute the right of France to reform her laws.

* Moniteur 20 du premier Mois, An. 2 de la Republique.

It would never have been his wish to employ external force with respect to the particular forms of government to be established in an independent country; he had no such wish, except as such interference was become essential to the security and repose of other powers. Under these circumstances, he demanded from France the termination of a system of anarchy, which had no force but for the purpose of mischief; the establishment of some legitimate and stable government, capable of maintaining the accustomed relations of union and peace. In conclusion, he appealed to the well-disposed inhabitants of France to follow the example of Toulon; to join the standard of an hereditary monarchy; not for the purpose of deciding, in the present moment of disorder, calamity, and public danger, on all the modifications of which this form of government might be susceptible; but, in order to unite themselves once more under the empire of law, morality, and religion, and to secure to their own country external peace, domestic tranquillity, a real and genuine liberty, a wise, moderate, and beneficent government, and the uninterrupted enjoyment of all the advantages which contribute to the happiness and prosperity of a great and powerful nation.

In her separate warlike operations, the efforts of Great Britain were first directed against the colonial possessions of the enemy. Five hundred men, under Major-General Cuyler, embarked in a fleet commanded by Vice-Admiral Sir John Laforey, from Barbadoes and St. Christopher's, landed in Great Courland Bay, in Tobago. Fort Castries was summoned; but the French commander, Lieutenant-Colonel Montreuil, refused to surrender; and the English force not being adequate to a regular siege, a night assault was made, and some difficulties, arising from an alarm which put the garrison on their guard, and the desertion of a negro guide having been surmounted, the flank companies entered the works; the enemy surrendered, and were accepted as prisoners of war. The loss was of no great amount. Of the besiegers, three were killed and twenty-four

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April 11th,
12th, 14th.
Capture of To-
bago.

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May 14th.
Saint Pierre
and Miquelon.

May 11.
Failure at
Martinique.

17th.

18th.

19-21.

Attempt on
St. Domingo.

State of the
island.

wounded; the enemy had fifteen killed and wounded*.

St. Pierre and Miquelon, where, in pursuance of the treaty of Versailles, no fortifications had been made, and where there were not above a hundred troops, surrendered to a force of three hundred men, under Brigadier-General Ogilvie, conveyed from Halifax by Captain Affleck†.

A less successful effort was directed against Martinique. At the invitation of the royalist party, Major-General Bruce landed, with about eleven hundred men, which he was led to believe would, with their aid, be amply sufficient to capture the town of Saint Pierre, and ensure the surrender of the whole island, except Fort Bourbon. Through unavoidable delays, the attack on the batteries which defended Saint Pierre was frustrated. A mistake occurred among the royalists, who fired on each other, wounded their commander, refused to obey any other officer, and finally retreated to the post from which they had marched; the British commander, finding his unassisted force inadequate to the intended conquest, reembarked his troops, but extended his protection to the royalists, both white and men of colour, whom he distributed among the neighbouring islands‡.

An attempt, attended with sufficient success to call forth future exertions, was also made on St. Domingo, the largest, the wealthiest, the most productive, and most capable of improvement of all the West India islands, proudly and not unjustly termed, by the French, the Queen of the Antilles.

The colony was divided between the Spaniards and the French, the former holding the much greater share of the land, the latter the much larger population, and greatly excelling in industry, knowledge, and all their beneficial results. The French, whom alone it is necessary here to notice, were naturally divided into three classes; the white population, the free people of colour, and the slaves. The white men were distinguished as creoles, or natives, and Europeans. The creoles con-

* London Gazette, June 2. † Gazette. ‡ Gazette, August 13.

sidered themselves lords of the soil, and only a few of them resided in towns or engaged in commerce or civil employment, while public functions and military command conferred almost exclusively on the Europeans, aided by their commercial intercourse and its consequent gains, made them consider themselves as the much more important class. Such were the leading men; but there existed an inferior sort, composed of mechanics, small traders, and adventurers in various occupations and professions, who were distinguished by the somewhat contemptuous appellation of *petits blancs*, or inferior whites. The differences between these parties and among themselves were much increased by the revolution. To their other distinctions, they now added those of royalist and republican; insisted on rights of representation and of making their governors accountable, not only to the administration at home, but to the colonists themselves; and the exertions of the *amis des noirs* and the general diffusion of notions of liberty and equality occasioned much fermentation, both among the slaves and free people of colour, and among the white men, who espoused with heat and determination opposite opinions respecting slavery. In the Spanish portion of the island, where no system of law or declared constitution on the subject had ever existed, the slaves were treated with mildness, and hardly felt the yoke of vassalage, while the free people of colour, under a system of practical liberality, derived from manners and not enforced by law, were admitted to all the privileges, and partook of all the charities incident to social life. In the French division, on the contrary, under the operation of a well-written and specious legislation, called the *Code Noir*, the people of colour, both free and slaves, suffered much hardship and cruelty, and were subjected to every possible indignity.

Without tracing minutely the events which led to ulterior consequences, it may suffice to say, that after much contention, in the course of which a governor was deposed, a declaration of rights voted, and many rival acts were performed by contending parties, each

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of which styled itself a government, the General Assembly was dissolved, and the ejected members sailed in a body to France, to obtain a restitution of their rights; but were, on the contrary, declared to have acted illegally, deprived of their seats, and a fresh election ordered. Insurrections rapidly followed each other, and blood was shed profusely, until at length, commissioners were sent from France to allay the ferment and maintain order; their efforts only occasioned new commotions, in the course of which first appeared an individual whose name was afterward much celebrated, the negro Toussaint L'Ouverture. New forces were sent from the mother country, and two new Commissioners, Polverel and Alibaud, were conjoined with Santhonax; but Alibaud soon abandoned a position in which he could not hope to effect any useful service, and, returning home, left the field to his two colleagues.

On the abolition of royalty in France, party feeling became inveterate, and insurrection combined and formidable. Santhonax was hemmed in at Cape François by thirty thousand insurgents, while he could muster no more than eighteen hundred men, a force not acquired without the aid of felons from the prisons and two black chiefs, Pierrot and Macaya; and, in the hope of gaining additional strength, the emancipation of all slaves was proclaimed. Jealous of the proceedings of the Commissioners, which completely annihilated every other authority, General Galbaud, Commandant at the Cape, shewed a disposition to resist. The deputed authorities deposed and placed him on board ship to answer for his conduct in France; but having prevailed on the crews to declare in his favour, he landed with them, and, after a momentary repulse, gained possession of the arsenal, and, turning the artillery against the government-house, drove out the Commissioners, and entered the town of Cape François unopposed. All was immediately given up to pillage, and the white men and the emancipated slaves seemed to vie with each other in acts of horrible atrocity. In the midst of their excesses, fire broke out in several

June 20th,
21st.

quarters, and the beautiful and flourishing town was reduced to a heap of ruins. Galbaud fled, ashamed of the effect of his own wickedness; but from this period the emancipated slaves commenced a course of savage violence and cruelty, not excelled by the blood-stained terrorists of La Vendée.

Under these circumstances, the white inhabitants sought the protection of England, and Colonel Char-milly was dispatched to Major General Sir Adam Wil-liamson, the governor of Jamaica, to represent their sufferings and their wishes. It may be supposed that this too ardent partizan made assertions and promises beyond his knowledge and his authority; for although success crowned the first enterprises, the force em-ployed was too insignificant to extend, or even to re-tain possession, unless aided by that which never was effectually given, the cordial co-operation of the ma-jority of the people. The thirteenth regiment, with two flank companies of the forty-ninth and a detach-ment of artillery, embarked under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Whitelocke, and, under the direc-tion of Commodore Ford, were put in possession of Fort Jerimie, not only without opposition, but amid joyful salutes of artillery and shouts of popular accla-mation. After landing the troops, the commodore sailed to Cape Nicola Mole, where, with similar ex-pressions of satisfaction, the Mole, together with the adjacent forts, was surrendered. By the articles of capitulation, the proprietors of Saint Domingo were to take oaths of fidelity and allegiance to the King of England, until a general treaty of peace should have finally settled the sovereignty of the island; and the governor appointed by him was, in the mean time, invested with full power to regulate and direct mea-sures of safety and police. A large quantity of ord-nance and military stores was captured, and a few naval prizes made; but, on the approach of the British squadron, the great body of merchant vessels had effected their escape to Aux Cayes. It was not to be expected that tranquil possession of these important posts would be retained, as much fickleness appeared

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Sept.
The English
invited.

19th.
22nd.

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India.

July.
Chanderna-
gore, Karical,
and Yanam
taken.

Siege of Pon-
dicherry.

Aug. 22.
Capitulation
proposed.

Answer.

among the people, and the commissioners of the Convention, commanding a considerable force, were preparing to attempt a re-conquest*.

In the East Indies, the success of the English arms was rapid and easy. Apprized, by early communication, of the French declaration of war, the Bengal government, without resistance, took possession of Chandernagore and the French factories, and all vessels bearing the flag of the Republic; while the Madras government seized, with equal facility, the factories of Karical and Yanam, and prepared for the siege of Pondicherry. Supplies by sea having been cut off by a squadron consisting of a frigate and three China ships, and the Nabob and Rajah of Tanjore co-operating with us most zealously, it was evident that the place could make no effectual resistance, and Colonel Braithwaite, to whom the operations were entrusted, summoned the French governor, Colonel Prosper de Clermont, to surrender, under honourable terms of capitulation. This offer was refused, and, after some days spent by the French in hostilities which could produce no effect but the unavailing effusion of blood, De Chermont sent a letter, in which he declared that humanity and the interests of the colony induced him to propose a capitulation, and required that the assailants should agree to a perfect suspension of arms, and a discontinuance of their works for four-and-twenty hours, during which he would reduce his articles into form. In answer, Colonel Braithwaite, with manly and stern indignation, reminded the Frenchman of his former offers, dictated by humanity and the welfare of the city. "You, sir," he said, "contrary to the dictates of humanity, and the real interests of the colony under your command, rejected those terms; and, without any probability of defence, continued to fire on my people—to do as much mischief as you could; and now, that my batteries are opened, you begin to think of humanity. I will give you till to-morrow

* Gazette, Dec. 9; Victoires et Conquêtes, tome i. p. 176, tome ii. p. 245; Mackenzie's Notes on Hayti, vol. ii. p. 5 to 42; and, for all the events in the West Indies, Rose's Naval History of the War, p. 70 to 74.

“ morning, at eight o’clock, to surrender at discretion,
 “ and trust to the known humanity and generosity of
 “ the English nation. Till then I will cease to fire,
 “ unless fired upon; but I will not cease to work; and
 “ if a shot is fired from you before the surrender of the
 “ place, all further application will be useless.”

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This letter had the desired effect. In the night, Colonel Tourville, the second in command in the fort, and the town-major, brought a second letter from the governor, describing the universal dread of the consequences of a surrender at discretion, and conjuring Colonel Braithwaite to abate somewhat of his rigour, and hold out assurance of security for life and private property. This request was complied with, and the place surrendered the next day. It was evacuated by all the troops, in such a state of intoxication, that the governor had sent to press forward the arrival of the victors, lest they should again have recourse to their arms, and commit outrages. The loss sustained by Colonel Braithwaite amounted to seventeen Europeans and fifty-six natives killed, and of the former fifty-one, the latter one hundred and two, wounded and missing*.

Deputation.

As the French had no grand fleet nor any considerable squadron at sea, naval operations were necessarily on a small scale. Among the few actions which showed spirit and skill, may be mentioned the capture of *La Cleopatra*, a frigate of thirty-six guns, off the Start, by Captain Pellew, in *La Nymphe*. On the Newfoundland station, the *Ambuscade*, a French frigate mounting thirty-six guns, and manned with four hundred choice seamen, having greatly annoyed our trade, the *Boston* frigate, commanded by Captain Courteney, with thirty-two guns and two hundred and four men, was dispatched for its protection. It has been said that Captain Courteney sent a formal challenge to the French commander; but this report arose merely from a jocular expression of an English officer

Naval actions.

June 10th.
La Cleopatra
 and *La*
Nymphe.

The *Boston*
 and the *Ambuscade*.

* The Marquis Cornwallis embarked for the purpose of giving his personal assistance to this, as the last piece of service likely to occur during his stay in India; but was disappointed, through some delays in his voyage and the unexpectedly early surrender of the place —Gazette.

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Aug. 1.

The Crescent
and La Réunion.

to an American in the revenue service. The frigates met accidentally, and a severe action ensued. Both fought courageously, and they separated disabled and exhausted; but the object of the conflict was in part accomplished, as the French commander was incapacitated, for a considerable time, from continuing his attacks on the English commerce. Off Barfleur, the Crescent frigate, of thirty-two guns, commanded by Captain Saumarez, encountered the Réunion, mounting thirty-six. After a close action of two hours, during which the Réunion was frequently raked, and sustained a dreadful carnage, the French captain struck his colours; and it was a remarkable instance of the difference of skill, that on board the Crescent not a man was hurt, while out of three hundred and twenty, the crew of their opponents, one hundred and twenty were killed or wounded.

Oct. 23.
Capture of the
Thames
frigate.

To counterbalance several other captures, the French boasted, in terms of vehement exultation, of their having acquired the Thames, of thirty-two guns, commanded by Captain Cotes, which was taken in her passage to Gibraltar, after a severe resistance, by three French frigates*.

May 25.
Treaties with
Spain, for pre-
venting sup-
plies to France.

In anticipation of the war, treaties had been negotiated between Great Britain and many of the principal powers on the Continent. With Spain it was agreed, that the ports of each country should be shut against the vessels of France, nor should either contracting party permit the exportation into the hostile country of warlike, or naval stores, wheat and other grain, or salted provisions; they were to unite all their efforts to prevent neutral powers from affording any protection, direct or indirect, on the seas or in the ports of France, to the commerce or property of that country; and they reciprocally promised not to lay down their arms (unless it should be by common agreement) without having obtained the restitution of all the dominions, territories, cities, or places belonging to either before the war, and captured by the enemy. With the King of

July 12.
With Naples.

* Rose's Naval History of the War, p. 74, et seqq.; Moniteur du 4 Nov. 1793, p. 180.

Naples, besides strong covenants for mutual aid, co-operation, and support, and for the maintenance of a commanding British squadron in the Mediterranean, it was agreed that his Sicilian Majesty should prohibit his subjects from all commerce with France, and not even permit the ships of other nations to export, from the ports of the two Sicilies to those of France, any sort of provisions, military or naval stores. In conventions signed with Prussia and the Emperor, and in a treaty with Portugal, similar clauses were inserted, and the contracting powers engaged, not only to abstain from exporting military and naval stores, grain and other provisions, into France, but to prevent the same commerce in neutral bottoms*.

These treaties show that the parties to them cherished a hope of reducing France to subjection, by increasing the misery and consequent commotions arising from daily privation and the approach of famine. It cannot be doubted that, in a state of war, such a mode of distressing an enemy is perfectly legitimate and proper; a nation, as well as a fortress or an island, may be put into a state of blockade, and the access of relief from any quarter strictly prevented. Such a proposition is true in the abstract; but whether there was or not a practical probability of producing a general effect on the French nation by a blockade of its coast, is a question not of so easy solution.

One bad effect, as might have been anticipated, flowed from the attempted restraint; the minor powers resented it as an insult and an injury. Their ships, it is true, were not captured as prizes, nor were their prohibited articles of commerce intercepted, without a fair and liberal compensation; but, perhaps, this fell short of the ample gain which the adventurers expected; and their governors, seeing their subjects thus submitted to foreign, forcible control, felt the indignation and resentment which naturally arise in the mind

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Prussia, Austria, and Portugal.

July 14.
Aug. 30.
Sept. 26.

Intent of these treaties.

Observations.

Dissatisfaction of minor powers.

* See these treaties, Parliamentary History, vol. xxx. p. 1048; Commons' Journals, vol. xlix. p. 4, and in all the collections of State Papers and historical documents.

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With England.

Dunkirk.

West Indies.

Toulon.

Affair of
San Jago.

of man when he finds that, because he is weak, he is obliged to crouch under the command of the strong*.

Beside the dissatisfaction thus given to some minor powers, the proceedings of Great Britain were viewed on other sides with jealousy and disapprobation. The attack upon Dunkirk, certainly very impolitic if the allies could vigorously have resolved to march upon Paris, was represented as a mere manœuvre of Mr. Pitt; a pledge he was desirous of offering to the overbearing pride of his nation, and the means of bringing back the old humiliations of France†. The expedition to the West Indies was represented as a waste of strength and of treasure which should have been devoted to the common cause. Spain, as already has been intimated, resented the destruction and capture at Toulon, as favourable to the British naval ascendancy, which, as a commercial and colonial power, it was against her interest to see established.

A foundation was laid for another discontent between the two countries, by an event, apparently of small importance, in comparison with the general interest of nations, the recapture of a prize. The San Jago, a rich Spanish register ship, had been taken by the Dumouriez, a French privateer, which, with her prize, was captured by the Phaeton frigate. On her condemnation, the Court of Admiralty allowed only a small salvage to the captors: but, on an appeal to the Privy Council, this determination was rescinded, and the entire cargo, comprising a large quantity of bullion, was condemned. With this decision the Court of Spain was exceedingly dissatisfied; but it proceeded on grounds clearly equitable and conformable to the law of nations. In general practice, England allowed to recaptors only an eighth part of the cargo; but in Spain, the recaptor would be entitled to the whole. England therefore adopted the rule of restitution established by Spain, treating them according to their own measure of justice. This principle was recognised in other

* Rose's Naval History, p. 82.

† These observations, often made at the time, are repeated by Lacrételle, tome ii. p. 69.

cases of our maritime law; and supported by uniform practice*.

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1793.
Proceedings in
Sardinia.

In enforcing their intent of excluding commerce from the ports of France, and preventing the smaller powers from affording military aid, or even holding political communication with the republicans, many acts of rigour were exercised, and many angry and irritating discussions maintained. While the English kept Toulon, an ambiguous position occasioned many irregularities. Vessels, manned by Frenchmen, were seized and plundered, even in the ports of different states, as the influence of the agents of the republic, or of the allies chanced to preponderate, and caused them to be considered as belonging to the subjects of Louis the Seventeenth or of the republic. The King of Sardinia, faithful, as yet, to his engagements, and impressed with a sense of his true interests, readily and cordially exerted himself against the common enemy, and was desirous to give and receive every assistance which could protect his own dominions and advance the cause of the allies. On the arrival of the British fleet in the Mediterranean, he expressed the truest joy, and committed the care of his affairs to the Chevalier de Revell, envoy to the States-general, but then employed as aid-de-camp to his father, General Count St. André, and afterward removed to Genoa†. The chevalier, without loss of time, communicated a plan, through Captain Inglefield, to Lord Hood, tending chiefly to the relief of Nice, which was pressed by the French, but offering no means which, either in a military or naval point of view, could render it practicable. Although Lord Hood declined to adopt his plan, still he declared his intention to cut off supplies and create an alarm on the coast of Provence; and the chevalier expressed his Sardinian Majesty's approba-

July 28th.

Aug. 18.

* Rose's Naval History, p. 77; and see the Judgment of Sir William Scott, in the case of the Santa Cruz, Robinson's Admiralty Cases, vol. i. p. 58, where the proceedings on the San Jago are recited.

† Letter of the Count de Hanteville to Captain Inglefield, 25 July, 1793—unpublished.

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tion of his proposal. To keep frigates cruising between Oneglia and Nice, to intercept the trade of the French ports, to protect the Sardinian privateers, and to impede the coasting vessels of the enemy, would operate more effectually. "Famine," he said, "was the most powerful and least burthensome mode of reducing the French."

Naples.

Aug. 20.

23rd.

Sept. 4—12.

At Naples, a cordial spirit of union with Great Britain in the public cause influenced the councils of the King, although his policy was checked by a fear that the French would take the earliest occasion of wreaking revenge for the abandonment of the treaty of neutrality which had been forcibly extorted from the Sicilian court. General Acton, the Neapolitan minister for foreign affairs, and for the war and marine departments, therefore, on the first requisition, transmitted to Sir William Hamilton a list of their navy, comprising four ships of the line, four frigates, and some smaller vessels, placing them entirely at his disposal. His Majesty also, with all convenient speed, commanded the French minister and all other subjects of the republic to quit his dominions, and published the treaties he had entered into with Great Britain. The intelligence of the capture of Toulon carried the spirit and confidence of the court to the highest pitch of enthusiasm; men, provisions, and stores, were copiously supplied to the English commanders; and not only in profession, but in act, a zealous and sincere spirit was displayed. This good intelligence continued, interrupted only by some personal disputes between Lord Hood and the Neapolitan Admiral Fortiguerra on points of discipline and etiquette, until the security of the British force at Toulon became doubtful, especially until General O'Hara was wounded and taken prisoner. From that time the King became uneasy and even desponding, and pressed most eagerly, by arguments drawn from the fears of all Italy, that the ships and arsenal at Toulon should be destroyed when it should be found impossible to retain the place. Thus, although the good faith of the Sicilian King remained

unaltered, his zeal was abated and his confidence greatly diminished*.

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Greater difficulties occurred in effecting arrangements with the Grand Duke of Tuscany, and the republic of Genoa; in both which places the French possessed a commanding influence among a portion of the people, and a powerful party in the government. Under the semblance or pretext of neutrality, these two countries were, in fact, influential and serviceable allies of France. Whether the project of reducing France, or at least some portion of it, by famine, were wise or not, these states took vigorous means to counteract it. Lord Hervey, the British ambassador at Leghorn, stated to the Grand Duke and to his own government, that these two states were perfect granaries as well as repositories of stores for the French, a course infinitely more detrimental to the general cause than an open declaration of enmity. Seven hundred and fifty thousand sacks of corn, which had been shipped from Leghorn to France, had saved the southern provinces from famine, had enabled the Toulon fleet to put to sea, and were the succours which prevented the Corsicans from expelling the French†. On the cession of Toulon to the English, De la Flotte, the French minister, had sufficient influence to induce the Tuscan government to sequester a large quantity of grain, purchased for the supply of that port; nor was the sequestration removed but on the most vigorous remonstrances from Lord Hervey. The merchants to whom the corn belonged were imprisoned, and, when their release was obtained by Lord Hervey, claiming them as under the protection of Great Britain, a project was formed by De La Flotte, the French Chargé d'affaires, for seizing one of them, and carrying him on board the republican frigate, *L'Imperieuse*, then in the road. The English minister, being apprised of this plan, redoubled his solicitations for the surrender of the grain; and, finally, Lord Hood de-

1793.
Tuscany.
October.

July 21.

* Letters and Correspondence, not published, of Sir William Hamilton and General Acton, addressed to each other and to Lord Hood.

† Letter from Lord Hervey to Lord Hood, not published.

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Genoa.

tached Admiral Gell with a squadron to support Lord Hervey in demanding the immediate expulsion of De la Flotte; and a stern requisition on this subject was succeeded by the seizure of *L'Imperieuse*. The Grand Duke at length consented to discontinue all intercourse with France, and unite with the allies*.

Measures of equal vigour were pursued at Genoa, where the possession of property in the French funds, joined with the influence of fear and corruption, secured to France a formidable party in the senate. Tilly, the French chargé d'affaires, was permitted privately to negotiate for, and transmit, contraband stores in Genoese vessels to the army of Italy; and the superior French force in the port insulted the English, and, on many occasions, violated the law of nations by attempts against British ships. As the French were avowedly protected in these proceedings by the government of Genoa, and all satisfaction refused, Admiral Gell directed the *Scipio*, a ship of seventy-four guns, to take out of the road the French frigate *La Modeste*. The crew had already abandoned her, and deposited her effects in magazines on shore; but the English forced the gates, and seized the stores. The Admiral then insisted on the immediate dismissal of Tilly, and, on the refusal of the Genoese, blockaded the port; the affair was discussed in London by the Genoese envoy; but the British government, after a full investigation, directed the commissioner at Toulon to maintain the proceedings of Admiral Gell, as just reprisals, and demand the dismissal of Tilly; the blockade however was raised, and the examination of Tilly's conduct not terminated when the British fleet evacuated Toulon†. In adjusting such points with persons so predisposed, discussions took place in which the British ambassadors were sometimes obliged to use terms not in exact conformity with the measured respect usually shewn to independent sovereigns‡; and if some points were carried, it was obvious that an

* Rose's Naval History of the War, vol. i. p. 54.

† Ibid. vol. i. p. 54.

‡ Letter from Lord Hervey to Lord Grenville, not published.

adverse and contentious spirit in the foreign potentates was greatly inflamed and exasperated.

Some other countries, Sweden in particular, had occasion to complain of interruptions to their commerce from British cruizers; but the most important negotiations were those with the United States of America. The rulers of France appear to have acted on a determination to involve that country in war, by engaging her so far as a partizan and ally of theirs, that hostility with other powers, especially Great Britain, should become inevitable. The conspicuous share which France had so recently taken in establishing the independence of America; service in the field, conference in political meetings, association in private life, and various other causes, had endeared many conspicuous actors in the French Revolution to individuals in the United States; while the same circumstances operated in producing similar results in a large portion of the community, and made them most anxiously desire that no combination of foreigners should compel the French to relinquish the government which they had chosen. The cause of monarchy, although that system was not without a few eminent partizans*, was not generally acceptable, or even endurable, among the American people; their own recent struggle against the authority of a lawful sovereign, and the republican form of the government which they had chosen, prevented the majority from perceiving beauty in any other system, and impelled many among them to believe, that wherever monarchy was rejected, and ancient institutions trampled under foot, a republic was beneficially established and freedom secured, although neither virtue, morals, justice, nor religion, entered as ingredients into the construction of society.

For six years after the establishment of their entire and absolute independence by a treaty of peace, the Americans had experienced numerous and great difficulties from the form and administration of their government. Thirteen several legislatures were to be

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Sweden.

America.

American
constitution
formed.

* Jefferson's Memoirs, Correspondence, &c. vol. iv. pp 505-507-513-516.

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consulted, and their concurrence obtained, before any general public act of the Congress could have full effect. Thus were the claims of justice delayed, the regulations of commerce left imperfect, and many of the sanctions affecting social life were in a state of vague uncertainty, for want of a general ordaining and controlling power, and of a central and presiding authority. The union of the States had been preserved by the pressure of war; by the influence of a stern necessity, rather than the spontaneous choice of all the thirteen republics. Peace had removed its main supports, the feeble ties of union were fast dissolving, and Congress nearly powerless. Without tracing the event through its entire progress, it may suffice to say, that, in 1785, commissioners were appointed by the States of Virginia and Maryland to make arrangements respecting the navigation of two rivers and part of the bay of Chesapeake. From their deliberations resulted a further commission to consider and report to Congress on general commercial regulations; they recommended a general Convention of deputies from all the states; and that being agreed to, Virginia, equally to her own honour and the benefit of the entire community, placed the name of Washington at the head of her list. The veteran warrior had, according to his expressed determination, retired strictly into private life; its enjoyments were his only solace; the improvement of his estate, by planting and agriculture, his only care. He had always interested himself in the welfare of his country, and, as a private, unambitious individual, had written opinions on the disputes and transactions of the times, and not without regret did he hear the call which summoned him again into public life. Even the pride which must ever animate a truly great and virtuous character, reminded him of his declaration, when he quitted military command, that his day of public life was closed: but at this call he repelled every opposing suggestion, and yielded himself up, the servant, as he had been the saviour, of his country. By the labours of the Convention, a constitution was formed, which was ap-

proved by the united Congress, and by each separate state. It provided, among other things, that a President of Congress, elected, not within the walls of the legislature, but by certain qualified individuals among the people, not permanently, but for a term, should be invested with certain peculiar authorities. This constitution was acknowledged, if not perfect, to be the best which the state of the country admitted. It came into operation in 1789, and the first President appointed was Washington*.

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To forward their views on America, and turn to their advantage the popular feeling, the French delegated as their minister to the United States, M. Genet, a man of talents and good education, but of a violent temper and obstinate determination. He had recently been employed as chargé d'affaires at Petersburg, where his conduct drew on him the displeasure of the Russian government, and he was, probably for that reason, selected as minister to the United States. This appointment was not announced to Gouverneur Morris, who was, at the time, the American minister at Paris, but, perhaps, as he observed, "the French ministry thought it a trait of republicanism to omit those forms which were anciently used to express good-will†." As a strong, though unusual denotement of the true nature of his apparently amicable mission, M. Genet was furnished by the Executive Council in Paris with three hundred blank commissions for privateers, to be given clandestinely to such persons as he might find in America disposed to fit out cruizers in the American ports to prey on British commerce‡.

M. Genet
sent as am-
bassador.

In all points, except that of taking up arms, the American government had shown the most favourable dispositions toward France. The republic was acknowledged without hesitation; the rights, both personal and commercial, of French citizens were admitted

Disposition of
the Americans

* Sparks's Life of Washington, vol. i. p. 423, et seqq.

† Letter from Gouverneur Morris to George Washington, 28th Dec. 1792. Sparks's Life of Gouverneur Morris, vol. ii. p. 267.

‡ Same, p. 288-291.

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Conduct of
Washington.

and protected; and the financial credit of the French nation was upheld by arrangements for liquidating the arrear still remaining due for advances during the war against Great Britain. But the views of the French government tended, without reserve or disguise, to compel America to renounce her neutrality. To resist their efforts demanded all the wisdom, vigour, and temper of government; and, fortunately for his country and for mankind, the head of that government was Washington, who had been re-elected president by a voice equally unanimous with that which first appointed him. Whatever enterprising ambition might attempt, or fear or delusion be inclined to grant, adverse to the true interests of his country, the foresight of the President discerned, and his firmness frustrated. He felt a sincere regard for the French nation, and a predilection for the republican form of government; but his zeal for the revolution did not assume a character so ferocious as to silence the dictates of humanity or of friendship. He was too wise and just to adopt the opinion studiously diffused and received by a great majority of his countrymen, including some of his own official coadjutors, that Great Britain had taken up arms to force upon the French nation a form of government to which they had declared their repugnance; had he viewed the case differently, the Americans, with the concurrence of a considerable portion of all classes, would have plunged hastily into the war. The President sought the opinions of the cabinet, upon questions submitted to each member individually, and answered in writing; and although they were not precisely unanimous, the measure which resulted from their deliberations was a proclamation of neutrality, agreed to by all, and which formed the basis on which the subsequent acts of government were founded. It expressly forbade the citizens of the United States to take part in hostilities on the seas; and warned them against carrying to any belligerent power articles which, according to the modern usages of nations, are deemed contraband; and enjoined them from all acts and proceedings incon-

April 22.

sistent with the duties of a friendly nation toward any of those at war.

Not unaware of this state of opinions, and fully imbued with the principles of his own government, M. Genet arrived on the American shores. His published credentials were regular, pacific, and complimentary to the nation where he was to reside; but he had private instructions, which subsequent events induced him to publish, indicating, that if the American executive should not be found sufficiently compliant with the views of France, the resolution had been taken to employ with the people of the United States the same policy which was so successfully used with those of Europe; and thus to effect an object which legitimate negotiations with the constituted authorities might fail to accomplish. Instead of Philadelphia, the French minister selected Charlestown in South Carolina for his place of landing, as its vicinity to the West Indies rendered it a peculiarly convenient resort for privateers, and was received by the governor and people of the province with honours and acclamations, which gave great hopes of the success of his further proceedings. Without loss of time, even before he had been formally acknowledged as a public minister, he issued orders for fitting out and arming vessels in that port, to cruise as privateers, and commit hostilities on the commerce of nations at peace with the United States; and, as he travelled through the country to Philadelphia, he was received every where with enthusiasm and extravagant marks of attention, calculated to create a belief that the great body of the American people heartily espoused the cause of the French revolution, and was ready to join the citizens of the new republic in carrying the banner of liberty and equality to the ends of the earth.

Although apprised of the course he was pursuing, and heartily disapproving it, the President received him with frankness and respect, and listened with attention, although not with conviction, to his declarations, that he had no intention to engage the United States in the war. Had the President been for a moment deceived, the course of events must have

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Arrival and
conduct of
Genet.

April 8th.

His reception
by Washington.

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Aggressions of
the French.Remon-
strances of the
British minis-
ter.

Their effect.

Anger of Ge-
net.His proceed-
ings checked.

speedily terminated the delusion. The privateers which he had commissioned, brought their prizes into American ports, where the cargoes were sold for the benefit of the captors ; and not content with these aggressions on the open sea, the French captured in the territories of the United States, within the Capes of the Delaware, the Grange, a British vessel, which had cleared out from Philadelphia.

Mr. Hammond, the British minister, made his complaints against these violations of the law of nations, and demanded restitution. On these requisitions a division of opinion existed in the American executive ; but, after much deliberation, it was decided that, since every nation had exclusive jurisdiction within its own territory, the act of fitting out armed vessels under the authority of a foreign power was an encroachment on national sovereignty and a violation of neutral rights, which the government was bound to prevent. A declaration was made that no privateers fitted out in this manner should find an asylum in the ports of the United States ; and the custom-house officers were instructed to keep a careful watch and report every vessel which contravened the laws of neutrality. The question of restitution involved intricate points of maritime law, and opinions on this subject varied ; but it was unanimously agreed that the original owners might justly claim indemnification, and that if the property was not restored by the captors, the value of it ought to be paid by the government.

The French minister protested against these decisions, became angry and violent, wrote offensive letters to the Secretary of State, and continued to encourage armed vessels to sail from American ports under the French flag. By the firmness of the executive, a check was put on this effrontery, and measures were taken to prevent, by force, the departure of such vessels. Finding himself baffled in his schemes, Genet resorted to menaces, accused the President of having usurped the powers of Congress, and more than insinuated that he would appeal to the people for redress. This insult, aggravated by his previous conduct, could not be

passed over in silence. It was obvious, indeed, that nothing could be hoped from any further intercourse with a man so wrong-headed. A statement of the particulars was forwarded to the French government, with a request that he might be recalled. Among other invectives, Genet stated that every obstruction by the government of the United States to the arming of French vessels, must be an attempt on the rights of man, upon which repose the independence and laws of the United States; a violation of the ties which unite the people of France and America; and even a manifest contradiction of the system of neutrality of the President: for, in fact, he said, if our merchant vessels, or others, are not allowed to arm themselves, when the French alone are resisting the league of all tyrants against the liberty of the people, they will be exposed to inevitable ruin in going out of the ports of the United States, which is certainly not the intention of the American people. Their fraternal voice has resounded from every quarter around me, and their accents are not equivocal. I wish that the federal government should give to the world the example of a true neutrality, which does not consist in a cowardly abandonment of their friends in the moment of danger, but in adhering strictly to the obligations they have contracted. By such proceedings they will render themselves respectable to all powers, preserve their friends, and deserve to augment their numbers*.

Not content with these intolerable insults, Genet took under his patronage and protection American subjects, and retained them as mariners on board a privateer, called after his own name, which he was preparing for sea. Two of these Americans, Gideon Hanfield and John Singletary, were arrested by the civil power. This lawful and reasonable act produced a new invective from the French Minister, who denied the legality of their caption, and in lofty terms demanded their immediate release, terming them officers

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June 8.
His violent
remonstrance.

Case of Han-
field and Sin-
gletary.

* On Genet's complaints, see *Memoirs and Correspondence of Jefferson*, vol. v. p. 271. The letter is long, but able and interesting.

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Prudent con-
duct of the
Americans.
Genet forms
clubs.

who had acquired, by the sentiments animating them and by the act of their engagement, anterior to every act to the contrary, the rights of French, if they had lost those of American, citizens*. While the American government firmly resisted these attacks on their sovereignty, and triumphantly repelled the arguments advanced in support of them, it is highly to their honour that the cajoleries sometimes resorted to by the French never deceived them into a momentary forgetfulness of their own dignity and duty, nor did the insolence in which Genet permitted himself to indulge ever draw from them a sentence or a word unbefitting their national character.

These arrogant and indecent proceedings of Genet were encouraged, by his having formed for himself a support of modern Gallic contrivance, improved upon the system of the Americans themselves in their revolution. He had established at Philadelphia, on the model of the Jacobin club at Paris, a democratic society, with affiliated associations in many parts of the United States. So excessive and so general were the demonstrations which they made of enthusiastic devotion to France; so open were their expressions of outrage and hostility toward all the powers at war with her; so thin was the veil which covered the chief magistrate from that stream of malignant opprobrium directed against every measure which thwarted the views of M. Genet; that a person less sanguine than that minister might have cherished the hope of being able ultimately to triumph over the opposition he experienced. At civic festivals, and other public assemblies of the people, the ensigns of France were displayed in union with those of America: the red cap, as a symbol of French liberty and fraternity, was tri-

* Hanfield was afterward brought to trial for his conduct; but it appearing that the crime was not wilfully, but ignorantly, committed; that, at the moment when apprised of it, he had shewn real contrition; that he had rendered meritorious service to his country during the late war, and had declared he would live and die an American, the jury acquitted him. *Memoirs and Correspondence of Jefferson*, vol. iii. p. 277. The event was hailed by the democratic party as a triumph of Genet; and as a proof that the courts were not sufficiently powerful to punish those who should openly violate the laws prescribed for the preservation of neutrality.—*Marshall's Life of Washington*, vol. v. p. 359.

umphantly passed from head to head; toasts were given, expressive of a desire to indentify the people of America with those of France; and, under the imposing guise of adhering to principles, not to men, containing allusions to the influence of the President which could not be mistaken.

Through the medium of the press, these sentiments were more largely communicated, and represented as flowing from the hearts of the great body of the people. In various other modes, that important engine contributed its aid to the extension of opinions calculated essentially to vary the situation of the United States. The proclamation of neutrality, which was treated as a royal edict, was not only considered as assuming powers not belonging to the executive, and as evidencing the monarchical tendencies of that department, but as demonstrating the disposition of the government to break its connexions with France, and dissolve the friendship which united the people of the two republics. Enmity to England was a striking feature in these publications. The conduct of Great Britain, ever since the treaty of peace, it was said, had furnished unequivocal testimony of hostility to the United States; in proof of which, the retention of the western posts, to which was ascribed the Indian war, was particularly urged. With this continuing enmity was contrasted the amicable dispositions professed by the French republic; and it was asked with indignation whether the interests of the United States required that they should pursue "a line of conduct entirely impartial between these two powers?" The supposed freedom of the French was opposed to the imagined slavery of the English; and it was demanded whether "the people of America were alike friendly to republicanism and monarchy, to liberty and to despotism?" There was a natural and inveterate hostility between monarchies and republics; the combination against France was a combination against liberty in every part of the world; and the destinies of America were inseparably linked with those of the French republic*.

* From Marshall's Life of General Washington, vol. v. p. 347.

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Commercial
regulations
of France.

Measures adopted by the governments both of England and France augmented the difficulties of America. The French were desirous, whether by soothing, menaces, or agitation, to make the United States party to the war. As a lure to their commercial cupidity, and a simulation of unbounded friendship and confidence, the National Convention passed a decree, opening the ports of their colonies to every neutral flag, and offering to the United States a new treaty, in which all mercantile distinctions between Americans and Frenchmen should be abolished. If this specious proposition was calculated to deceive any portion of the American people, the delusion was speedily dispelled by a decree of the French legislature, that ships of war and privateers were authorized to seize, and carry into the ports of the republic, merchant vessels, wholly or in part loaded with provisions, being neutral property, bound to an enemy's port, or having on board merchandize belonging to an enemy. On a vigorous remonstrance from the American minister, the National Convention declared that vessels of the United States were not comprised in its regulations, which were repugnant to the treaty made in February 1778; but they speedily revoked this concession, abolished the distinction between America and other neutral nations, and many captures of considerable value, attended with violence, and even murder, were the consequence.

May 9.

23rd.
28th.Order in
council.
June 8.

The English government answered this proceeding by an order in council, authorising British cruizers "to stop all vessels loaded, wholly or in part, with corn, flour or meal, bound to any port in France, or any port occupied by French armies;" and provisions were made for indemnity to the owners and the release of the crews. Not in America alone, but in almost every other neutral country, this measure occasioned great umbrage and discontent; numerous complaints were preferred by both parties to the government of the United States; some of those made by Genet were too absurd in their purport, and too insolently expressed, to be well received, although the Americans administered, with respect to them, strict and impartial

justice. On the whole, however, the British order in council was reprobated as manifestly contrary to the law of nations*.

It were an endless and trifling task to enumerate the various complaints to which this state of things gave rise: one may serve as a specimen. The captain of the *Little Cherub*, an American vessel, manned and commanded by natives of that country, having taken on board thirty French passengers, whom the Spanish government had sent away, conducted them to Havre; where, having obtained a passport from the Executive Council for going to Hamburg, he was taken and carried into Dunkirk by the privateer *Le Vrai Patriote*, and the lugger *L'Argus*. The captain and crew were very ill treated, although they made no resistance; one of the captors seized the second mate by the collar, and without the slightest provocation blew out his brains. The National Convention expressed great indignation, and sent the murderer to a trial; but his accomplices, in direct contradiction to the American witnesses, swore to his innocence, and a French jury acquitted him. Against this proceeding, the American government offered no complaint, and, as in the case of arming French vessels in their ports, they would not admit that the discussion of their rights or grievances should be taken up by any foreign power†.

Other causes of disagreement between the British and American governments received an additional vehemence from the circumstances of the times, and the inflamed state of the public mind. The unsettled question of boundary between their dominions was pressed into notice, and treated with additional heat, on account of claims advanced, or apprehensions expressed, by the Spaniards, and by movements of the native Indians, which were unjustly supposed to be excited or fomented by the government of England. Another question, more embarrassing, and of frequent occurrence, arose out of the practice of impressing seamen.

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Case of the
Little Cherub.

June.

July 3.

Disputes with
Great Britain.

Boundary
question.

Impressment
of seamen.

* See a Letter from Mr. Jefferson to Mr. Pinckney, 7th September, 1793; Jefferson's Memoirs, vol. iii, p. 292.

† Same to same, 14th June, 1793, p. 254.

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It often happened that, amidst a crew of Americans, some subjects of Great Britain were found, liable to serve in our navy; but the difficulty of discriminating between men who spoke the same language, adopted the same dress and manners, and who so recently had been undisputed fellow-subjects, occasioned many acts of violence, some of wrong, and gave rise to many complaints, in which the discernment of exact justice was additionally perplexed by the intervention of heat and the subtilty of chicane.

Speech of
Washington to
Congress.
Dec. 4.

On the meeting of Congress, the President, fully aware of the situation of his country, and acquainted with the arts and agitations of faction, recommended to their attention a course of conduct calculated to maintain peace, confirm prosperity, and sustain national dignity. He expressed his resolution, in the present posture of affairs, both new and delicate, to adopt general rules, which should conform to treaties, and assert the privileges of the United States. "I cannot recommend to your notice," he proceeded, "the fulfilment of our duties toward other nations, without pressing upon you the necessity of placing ourselves in a condition of complete defence, and of exacting from them the fulfilment of their duties toward us. The United States ought not to indulge a persuasion that, contrary to the order of human events, they will for ever keep at a distance those painful appeals to arms with which the history of every other country abounds. There is a rank due to the United States among nations, which will be withheld, if not absolutely lost, by the reputation of weakness. If we desire to avoid insult, we must be able to repel it; if we desire to secure peace—one of the most powerful instruments of our prosperity,—it must be known that we are, at all times, ready for war." The prudence which distinguished all parts of this speech, regulated the conduct of the government. The disputes with Spain were put in a train of negotiation; and, with respect to France, the Brissotine faction, which had employed the incendiary Genet, being no longer in power, he had been recalled, and his govern-

ment, professing to disapprove entirely his proceedings and criminal manœuvres, promised that he should be punished. The American minister disclaiming all wishes for such a course, the matter fell into oblivion; but Genet preferred charges and representations which contributed, with other causes, to make Mr. Morris quit his station as American minister at Paris, where he was succeeded by Mr. Monroe*.

Under the auspices of Great Britain, a truce for a year had been concluded between Portugal and the regency of Algiers, which, by withdrawing a small squadron stationed during the war by the former power in the Straits, opened to the cruisers of the latter a passage into the Atlantic. The capture of American merchantmen, which was the immediate consequence of this measure, was believed, in the United States, to have been its motive. Not admitting the possibility, that a desire to extricate Portugal from a war unproductive of any advantages, and to leave her maritime force free to act elsewhere, could have induced this interposition of England, the Americans ascribed it exclusively to that enmity to their commerce, and jealousy of its prosperity, which had, as they conceived, long marked the conduct of those who administered the affairs of this nation. "From governments accustomed to trust rather to artifice than to force or to reason," the American author, from whose work this matter is taken, observes, "and influenced by vindictive passions, which they have not strength or courage to gratify, hostility may be expected to exert itself in a cruel, insidious policy, which unfeelingly dooms individuals to chains, and involves them in ruin, without having a tendency to effect any national object. But the British character rather wounds by its pride and offends by its haughtiness and open violence, than injures by the secret indulgence of malignant, but paltry and unprofitable, revenge: and, certainly, such unworthy motives ought not lightly to be imputed to a great and

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1794.
August.

Truce between
Portugal and
Algiers.

* Life of Gouverneur Morris, vol. ii. pp. 358, 359, 371, 452; Jefferson's Memoirs and Correspondence, vol. iv. p. 50, et seqq.

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1794.
Jan. 2.
American
armament.

Feb. 10.
Acts of party.

March 27.

Intelligence
from England.

April 4.

Democrats
and federals.

“magnanimous nation, which dares to encounter a world, and risk its existence, for the preservation of its station in the scale of empires, of its real independence, and of its liberty*.”

To protect their commerce and property against the expected danger, the Americans voted the establishment of a navy, consisting of six frigates, of which four were to carry forty-four, and two thirty-six, guns. This measure, vehemently opposed in its progress, was considered favourable to France and adverse to Great Britain; and other demonstrations of a hostile spirit took place. A speech was fabricated and published, as having been delivered by Lord Dorchester to the Indian nations, declaring that war between Great Britain and American was to be expected before the end of a year. In an official report, tendered by Mr. Maddison, the advantages derived from their commercial connexion with France were described as infinitely superior to those accruing from one with Great Britain. A resolution was moved for sequestrating all debts due to British subjects, and for taking means to secure their payment into the treasury, as a fund out of which to indemnify the citizens of the United States for depredations committed on their commerce by British cruisers. Before this measure was decided on, a resolution was moved for prohibiting all intercourse between the two countries; but the mind of the legislators was considerably altered by the receipt of intelligence from Mr. Pinckney, their minister in London, that the orders in council for detention and sale of American cargoes had been much relaxed and explained, and that Lord Grenville had expressed sentiments highly amicable to the United States. This communication rather irritated than appeased the party distinguished as democratic, who hated England, and, in their idolatry of France, adopted even their adoration of the Mountain and the Revolutionary Tribunal; while their opponents, called federals, hailed the opportunity of keeping their country in peace and

* Marshall's Life of General Washington, vol. v. p. 399.

independence, and preserving her from falling abject and helpless into the arms of France*.

At home, the proceedings of the societies already alluded to, and the efforts to which they gave rise, absorbed a great portion of public attention. In England, where freedom of association and discussion is justly ranked among the indispensable elements of political life, every attempt to restrain it is viewed with suspicion and alarm, and the warmest friends of government pause long, before they determine to act, and often differ essentially in their opinions of the course to be pursued. Those to whom the care of the public welfare was committed would have incurred an awful responsibility, and been marked with indelible disgrace, had they suffered the doctrines and combinations of those who were enemies to all government to sap the principles and pervert the energies of the people. The object to which they had pretended to limit their views, the reform of Parliament by legal and constitutional means, had long been abandoned in practice. The Parisian insurrections in June and August, the massacres of September, the deposition, imprisonment, trial, and murder of the French King, were to them themes of eulogy and congratulation, and the most sanguinary of those who delivered opinions against him in the Convention were, by these societies, hailed as brothers, and admitted as honorary associates. Robbery, murder, regicide, blasphemy, and atheism, provoked from them no expression of disapprobation; but the example of France was ostentatiously displayed for imitation. Still it was a point of great difficulty to determine the time of beginning to act, and the mode of proceeding. If very early exertions were made, it would be alleged that the efforts of government were expended on an adversary too insignificant and

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England.
Proceedings
on sedition.

* For these particulars, beside the authorities of Marshall, Sparks, Gouverneur Morris, and Jefferson, already referred to, I have consulted a French collection of State Papers, entitled, "Actes et Mémoires concernant les négociations entre la France et les États Unis de l'Amerique;" authentic copies of the Correspondence of Thomas Jefferson, Esq. and George Hammond, Esq. two parts, with an Appendix; Debrett's State Papers; and the Annual Register.

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feeble to claim them; if they were too long delayed, censure, not less violent, would be applied to those who, if they did not exactly nourish and foster the brood of traitors, at least gave them time and opportunity to grow in strength and acquire power by mutual support.

Prosecutions.

Numerous prosecutions were instituted in the metropolis, and in various parts of the kingdom, against those who uttered seditious expressions; those publishing dangerous writings, and who united in disloyal associations. In these prosecutions, government laboured under manifest disadvantages. There is always a popular feeling in favour of men, who, under semblance of the love of liberty, dare to brave legitimate authority; if the parties selected are unknown, their obscurity and insignificance are alleged as proofs that the pursuit of them was unnecessary; if already conspicuous, it is inferred that they have been attacked in consequence of a long-nourished dislike; against convictions every possible assertion is advanced; the judge is said to have used influence; the jury to have been deluded or corrupt, or some unknown cause has operated to the prejudice of the defendant; but an acquittal is hailed as a proof, not only of the innocence of the accused, but of the integrity, the purity, and the courage of the jury; thus the convicted were often revered as martyrs, the acquitted hailed as heroes. Lord Mansfield is reported to have said, that a prosecution by government should never fail; the observation is worthy his experience and wisdom; it imports that the state ought never to commence one but on certain and well-considered grounds, nor to conduct it without the ability and discretion which should command success*.

It was a remarkable feature of perverseness in those who called themselves, at this period, patriots and reformers, that, although France was at war with us, and her daily denunciations menaced us with ruin and

* Preface to the Report of the Speech of Sir James Scarlett, in the King v. Pinney.

extinction, still they held up her cause as deserving the favour of all enlightened men, and expressed hopes and wishes for her success, as sanguine as if the welfare of England had been her only motive for taking up arms; that while the intelligence daily received from that country shewed that, upon pain of death, no man durst do, or forbear, or act, write a line, or utter a word, which was not in strict conformity with the views of the ruling party, they persisted in extolling France as the land of true liberty, and her government as the model on which we ought to reform our own. The daily horrors of the system of terror, the Revolutionary Tribunal, with its guillotine, had no power to excite in these minds any sympathy with the sufferers, or any feeling but in favour of the assassins.

A cursory view of some of the prosecutions will shew the tone of attack and defence, and their result. The principal works for the publication of which proceedings were instituted, were, "Paine's Rights of Man, Part the Second"; his "Address to the Addressers," and a farrago of scandal, indecency, and sedition, by Charles Pigott, called the "Jockey Club." For selling the Rights of Man, one Thomas Spence, who kept a book-stall in Chancery lane, was prosecuted at the Middlesex session, but saved by a defect in the indictment. Richard Phillips, a printer of a newspaper at Leicester, was found guilty, and sentenced to eighteen months imprisonment. Three eminent London booksellers, named Robinson, were convicted at Bridgewater, for selling the same work in that place, by transmitting a number of copies to a correspondent, and received sentence of fine and imprisonment. For publishing Paine's "Address to the Addressers," Holland, a print-seller in Oxford street, being convicted at the Middlesex session, was condemned to one year's imprisonment, with a fine of fifty pounds, and competent sureties to keep the peace. In the the Court of King's Bench, Ridgway, a bookseller of considerable eminence, for publishing all the three obnoxious works, was sentenced to three terms of imprisonment, making

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Prosecutions
for publica-
tions.

Feb. 23.

April 19.

Aug. 6.

Nov. 26.

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Aug. 6.

conjointly four years, and to two fines, amounting to two hundred pounds. For the same publications, Symonds, another member of the same trade, underwent a similar sentence. Daniel Holt, printer of a paper called the Newark Herald, was tried at the assizes for Nottinghamshire, on criminal informations, for publishing Paine's Address, and one of his own to the tradesmen, mechanics, labourers, and other inhabitants of the town where he dwelt, on the reform of Parliament. In his defence it was asserted, and in subsequent proceedings the assertion was repeated, that, in 1782, Mr. Pitt had given countenance and circulation to a pamphlet, by Major Cartwright, of which the address under prosecution was a mere reprint, without alteration. To prove this fact, the Major was called as a witness; but, as the matter was considered irrelevant, his examination was not permitted. As the report still continued to be circulated, and was by many believed to be true, Major Cartwright, by letter, in a periodical publication*, explicitly denied that Mr. Pitt had any knowledge whatever of its original appearance, that he would ever have promoted its publication, or was ever a member of the society from which it emanated. The defendant, being found guilty, was brought before the court for judgment in the following term: Mr. Erskine strenuously endeavoured to obtain new trials; but Mr. Holt was sentenced to pay two fines of fifty pounds, and imprisoned in Newgate four years. The effect of the fines, it is said, was the ruin of his circumstances, and that of the imprisonment the destruction of his health; so that his death ensued shortly afterwards†.

Nov. 21.

For seditious
words.
Sept. 30.

These were among the principal prosecutions of the year for seditious publications; words also were not unvisited. Pigott, already mentioned as the author of the Jockey Club, dining at a coffee-house in the city with one William, by some called Dr., Hudson, their conversation, or rather their exclamations, took a

* Monthly Magazine, vol. xix. p. 34.

† Howell's State Trials, vol. xxii. p. 1189, and the authorities there cited.

form which irritated and alarmed all the other guests in the room. Hudson termed the King, George Guelph, a German hog-butcher, a dealer in human flesh by the carcass, who sold his Hanoverian to his British subjects for thirty pounds a piece; and, not satisfied with that, was partner with the Prince of Hesse Cassel, and had fifteen pounds a head for each of his carcasses. He then loudly gave as a toast, "The French republic;" the other parties in the room gave "The King;" on which Hudson loudly proclaimed, as his sentiment, "The French republic, and may it triumph over all the governments in Europe." This conduct excited so much indignation in the company, that violence was apprehended; but the master of the house closed his doors, and sent for a constable, by whom the two offenders were taken in custody. The sitting alderman having committed them to prison, a habeas corpus was sued out, and the parties heard before Mr. Justice Gould and Mr. Baron Perryn, who remanded them. As it appeared that Pigott had rather assented to than joined in the seditious expressions of his companion, the bill of indictment against him was rejected; Hudson alone stood on his trial at the Old Bailey. Without any great display of talent or ingenuity, he defended himself; he was found guilty, and sentenced to pay a fine of two hundred pounds, and to be imprisoned two years in Newgate*.

Two other prosecutions for seditious words, uttered in taverns, or upon sudden occasions, may be noticed. The first was that of John Frost, the attorney already mentioned; having dined in an upper apartment at a coffee-house, he descended into the public room, and in a loud tone exclaimed, "I am for equality and no king," repeating the expression until expelled by the indignant company. A criminal information against him was tried, and the words being proved by several witnesses, Mr. Erskine exerted his wonted talent in his behalf; he spoke of him as an associate of Mr. Pitt,

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Oct. 2.

5th.

Dec. 9.

John Frost's
case.

Nov. 6.
1792.

1793.
May 27.

* Howell's State Trials, vol. xxii. p. 1019—1256.

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June 13.

ten years before, in the cause of parliamentary reform ; argued that the words were not deliberately, but unguardedly uttered, while the defendant was heated with political discussion and with wine ; and that the conversation did not originate with him, but with one of the witnesses who made inquiries about the state of proceedings in France. He was found guilty, sentenced to six months' imprisonment in Newgate, to stand for one hour on the pillory at Charing-cross, and to find security for his good behaviour for five years ; his name was also struck off the roll of attorneys. In a very feeble state of health, he was taken, at the end of his imprisonment, before Mr. Justice Grose, and, the prescribed recognizances having been entered into, the populace took the horses from the carriage in which he was placed, and dragged him in triumph through the streets to his residence in Spring-gardens, stopping and shouting at Saint James's Palace, Carlton-house, and some other places*. The part of the sentence which related to the pillory was not executed ; it might be supposed that this forbearance was occasioned by his state of health ; but he himself averred, that, from his influence with the mob, government was afraid to put it in force. " It would," he said, " have been a woful day for Westminster†." It is probable that he miscalculated the feeling of government ; but it was undoubtedly prudent to avoid a struggle, in which much evil must have been done, although the aggressors would have been the sufferers. In fact, Frost was not worthy of the efforts made about him ; he was not respectable in character or connexion, not formidable for ability, and in his profession very lightly esteemed ; his punishment for words, uttered under the circumstances proved in his case, exalted rather than depressed him in general regard ; but even this patriotic martyrdom produced little consideration ; he lived many years afterward, completely obscure and unnoticed.

Breillatt.

Thomas Breillatt was a pump-maker in London.

* Howell's State Trials, vol. xxii. p. 471.

† From private information.

Charmed, like so many others, with the acts and proceedings of the patriots in France, he called a meeting at Hackney, where he had a dwelling, and, both there and at his other residence, made declarations inculcating the destruction of all kings, as there never could be peace or good times until they were expelled from the face of the earth; with many other expressions of a similar tendency. He was not honoured with a criminal information, but tried on an indictment at the session, and, being found guilty, sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment, a fine of one hundred pounds, and to find sureties for his good behaviour for three years*.

If the prosecution of this misled mechanic might be deemed below the dignity of government, far different was that of William Winterbotham, a dissenting minister at Plymouth, who had preached two sermons, in which he instructed his auditory that the laws were not equal, the application of public money corrupt and vicious; that the people of this country had as much right as those of France to stand up for their liberty; that the King had no title to the throne more than the Stuarts had, and that it was time for the people to come forward in defence of their rights. These and many other seditious expressions were proved by several who had witnessed the delivery of the sermons. In defence, several persons were called to prove that they were present and no such expressions were uttered; and his counsel, Mr. Gibbs, made an able and judicious analysis of the indictments and of the evidence; but the jury, after a deliberation of two hours and a half in the first, and five hours and a half in the second, case, found him guilty. The court sentenced him to pay two fines of one hundred pounds, and to be imprisoned for two terms of two years, in the new prison at Clerkenwell. At his own request, and with the consent of the Attorney-general, this place of detention was exchanged for Newgate†.

In several of these trials, it had been observed by

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Dec. 6.

William Win-
terbotham.

1792.

Nov. 5.
18.

1793.

July 20—26.

Nov. 27.

* Howell's State Trials, vol. xxii. p 909.

† Ibid, p. 923 to 908.

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counsel for the prisoners that the sentences were of unprecedented severity; they were so, but the publications which occasioned them were of unprecedented malignity. Founding themselves on the example of a revolution, the horrible effects of which were daily becoming more and more atrocious and alarming, these publishers, speakers, and preachers, felt no hesitation in advising the British people to reject all lawful rule, to depose their sovereign, to destroy their nobility, cashier their magistracy, and subject all, under the fallacious notion of reform, to the arbitrary and uncertain rule of such leaders as chance, caprice, or contrivance might elevate into power. Yet the compassion, characteristic of the British nation, felt not only by those who were imbued with the sentiments of the accused, but by those who were to sit in judgment on their offences, operated strongly in favour of some of them, while a rigid attention to the rules of judicial administration always guided those who presided at the trials.

June 3.
Eaton.

Daniel Isaac Eaton was tried at the Old Bailey on an indictment for publishing the second part of the "Rights of Man." The jury found him guilty of publishing, but not with a criminal intention. After some discussion, the question as to the legal import of this verdict was referred to the twelve judges, which could not be obtained until the following month of November. In the mean time, the same defendant was again tried, on an information by the Attorney-general, for publishing "Paine's Address to the Addressers," when a special jury of the city of London found that he was guilty of publishing; and being informed by the court that their verdict ought to be either guilty or not guilty, they only altered it so far as to say "guilty of publishing the pamphlets in question;" declining to find, as they might by the recent statute, whether it were a libel or not. The court of King's Bench was afterward moved that the verdict might be entered according to its legal import; but this question was never argued, on account of the precedency of the question before all the judges, and on that the Attorney-general

July 10.

Nov.

never moved for their decision, and the proceeding consequently had no result. To conclude at once the narrative of this man's fortunate escapes; another indictment was preferred against him at the Old Bailey, for publishing a seditious libel, called "Politics for the People, or Hog's Wash." Bail to a larger amount than he could obtain having been required, he was detained two months in Newgate; and, upon his trial, not negatively or argumentatively, but unequivocally and clearly pronounced not guilty*. Mr. Gurney, then a very young advocate, called upon by accident to lead on the occasion, by a speech powerful in argument and eloquence, and brilliant with wit and fancy, not only effected the safety of his client, but fixed his own fame and laid the foundation of his future fortune and eminence.

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Dec.

1794.
Feb. 24.

Another prosecution, which failed, was against Messrs. Lambert, Perry, and Grey, as printers and proprietors of the Morning Chronicle. The publication charged to be seditious was an address from a society for political information at Derby, wherein the usual complaints of taxation, oppression, and tyranny were made, and the usual cause assigned, the defective representation of the people. These sentiments were expressed in language conveying opprobrium on all the institutions of the country. The publication was admitted, and the Attorney-general and Mr. Erskine were heard. Lord Kenyon, after adverting to the state of the times when the publication took place, and the probability that emissaries from France were then engaged in spreading the maxims prevalent in that country, pronounced his opinion that the paper in question was published with a wicked, malicious intent, to vilify the government, to make the people discontented with it and with the constitution, and to infuse into their minds a belief that they were oppressed, and on this ground he considered it as a gross and seditious libel. After deliberating five hours, the jury returned as their verdict, "guilty of publishing, but with no malicious intent." Being informed that such a verdict

1793.
Dec. 9.
Lambert,
Perry, and
Grey.

* Howell, vol. xxii. pp. 753, 785; vol. xxiii. p. 1013.

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Observations.

meant nothing, and could not be received, they again retired, and, in ten hours more, pronounced the defendant not guilty*.

These trials, taken separately, seem to have employed the force of government on objects very unworthy of their efforts; but, viewed collectively, they show the extreme difficulty and danger of our position. In all parts of the kingdom, associations were formed, to produce revolution by inflaming popular discontent. Whether the suspicion entertained, that French agency and French money were employed, is well or ill founded, this at least was certain, that a central society or club existed in the metropolis, corresponding with affiliated bodies in country towns; that from that centre proceeded the forms of addresses to be used, and recommendations of pamphlets to be disseminated and quoted. To those who considered only the separate prosecutions, the sentences on those who were convicted might seem unnecessarily severe; and the decisions of juries, where they acquitted, if open to the charge of perverseness, would find an apology from considerations allied to temperance and compassion, if not within the compass of strict legal justice. Much clamour was raised against government for the prosecutions they did institute; but had they altogether forborne, and disastrous events had ensued, they would have been more severely and justly censured for culpable neglect. In fact, in defending the persons who were tried, the observation was more than once made, that, by the long omission of prosecution, a sanction was given to the libels which were most the subject of complaint; that men were led to transgress the laws, from a supposition that their breaking them was a matter of indifference.

However confidently such assertions might be made, or arguments upon them advanced, government was neither blinded by want of information, nor crippled by timidity or indecision. It was deemed necessary to visit with punishment those who disseminated certain works and those who indulged in certain

London Cor-
responding
Society.

* Howell's State Trials, vol. xxii. p. 953.

expressions, not altogether because such things were in themselves dangerous, but because they were the outward signs of certain intentions, and the means used to render them popular and promote their execution. The London Corresponding Society, the focus and centre of seditious movement, had, besides its correspondence with affiliated bodies in the country, dispatched delegates in various directions. Scotland having formed a similar body of its own, under the specious title of "Friends of the People," entered into the alliance; and the "United Irishmen" readily added their countenance and assistance.

By their strenuous co-operation, a body was formed and met in Edinburgh, under the title, at first, of "General Convention of the Friends of the People;" but they afterward assumed that of the "British Convention of Delegates of the People, associated to obtain Universal Suffrage and Annual Parliaments." At their first meeting, at the mason's lodge, those were acknowledged as members who produced commissions from various divisions and denominations of persons in Edinburgh, and other parts of Scotland. There were also delegations from the Crown and Anchor Society, and the Corresponding Society in London, and from the Constitutional Society of Sheffield. At this first meeting, one hundred and fifty-three qualified members appeared, and they afterward received some addition. They adjourned and resumed proceedings, several times in the course of the same day; formed committees for particular purposes, divided themselves into sections, whose reports were headed "Liberty-court, Liberty-stairs, Liberty-hall," and dated "First Year of the British Convention, one and indivisible;" some had "Vive la Convention!" prefixed, and ended with "Ca ira." They constituted primary societies, provincial assemblies, and departments; appointed committees of organization, instruction, finance, and secrecy, denominating their meetings "sittings;" granting honours of sitting, and making honourable mention in the minutes of acts which met their approbation*. In

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Joined by
societies in
Scotland and
Ireland.

Oct. 29.
Edinburgh
Convention.

Their proceed-
ings.

* Howell, vol xxiii. p. 779.

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these particulars, they conformed to the model of France; but they made a laudable deviation by imploring the Deity to bless their proceedings, and voting that a public prayer should be made by the societies for the Lord's assistance in the cause of reform.

Among their earliest proceedings was a resolution in favour of universal suffrage and annual parliaments, in which the words of the Duke of Richmond were closely copied. A petition was to be framed in pursuance of this resolution: some proposed that it should be addressed to the King; but this was rejected, as some of the delegates declared they would as soon petition the Pope; and it was therefore resolved to address the House of Commons. Universal suffrage, it was said, would only be doing justice to the rabble of Scotland, the scum of England, and the wretches of Ireland.

These proceedings, if not blameless, appear unimportant, and in some particulars seem rather calculated for burlesque than for serious efforts toward effecting the overthrow of the state, and a total change in the constitution. Poverty drove the parties to the humblest shifts. They recommended the printing of their publications on coarse paper, the price of each not to exceed a halfpenny. As the means of raising a revenue and discharging their debts, it was voted that twice in the year each society should collect from every member, if a master, one shilling, and from every servant in employ, sixpence. The like sums paid at the entry of members, and voluntary donations, were to form the fund for defraying the public expenses, and be wholly at the disposal of the Convention. They further imposed a door tax on strangers and members of the society who were not delegates, but attended to hear the debates. The produce of these financial measures appears irresistibly ridiculous, when the self-imputed grandeur of the body and the extent of their designs are considered. The first recorded collection is of two pounds two shillings and four pence, to which were added two shillings and ten pence, the balance of a tavern reckoning; an improved collection was four pounds five shillings and eight pence, from which a

deduction was made for two bad shillings. Small donations, of which there were not many, were thankfully received; but one of five guineas was acknowledged with tumultuous acclamations; a gift of two guineas obtained a letter of warm thanks; and while smaller tributes occasioned a general similar expression of approbation and gratitude, one guinea was honoured with a specific notice.

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Such evident indications of craving beggary were sufficient to cast on the body a contemptible character; but still their exertions, their resolutions, and their publications were fraught with danger, and demanded careful vigilance and powerful intervention. When political associations are formed, professing revolutionary principles, those to whom the public safety is intrusted are not to consider whether or not the parties are sufficiently strong to induce a belief that they can ultimately succeed in subverting the government, but whether their malignity, activity, and probable influence are such, that, if left unmolested, they may encourage their rash and deluded followers to interrupt the public peace, and require the efforts of all the civil, and even the military, force to restore order. The speeches, the votes, and the publications of this Convention rapidly assumed a dangerous character. They were to have a president, with three assistants to be elected daily; their proceedings were to be published weekly; they were to be formed into divisions of fifteen members, chosen by lot, each of which was to meet at a separate station in Edinburgh; a committee of thirteen was appointed to prepare a plan of union between England and Scotland; another was to compose a declaration of the natural, inalienable, and imprescriptible rights of man. Every member present was to subscribe the resolutions; and it was proposed that all members of the Convention and the primary societies should subscribe a solemn league and covenant.

One of their favoured projects was to enlighten the Highlanders. If a knowledge of their rights were disseminated among them, they would no longer bow to the yoke, or be at the disposal, of their tyrannical task-

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masters. An act passed in the late session of the Irish parliament, commonly called the Convention Act, was described as a prototype of what might be attempted in England; and it was resolved that all the patriotic members of the society of United Irishmen should be admitted to speak and vote in the Convention. It was also moved that a motion in the House of Commons for a similar bill, should be a notice to the delegates of the respective societies immediately to meet in convention to assert their rights. It was to be the tocsin to assemble the friends of liberty. Some intimations were given of an intention to transfer the sittings to England, and the city of York was mentioned as proper and central. One member observed that York was the seat of proud aristocracy—of an archbishop; however, he said, I would not object to going there; as the Saviour of the world was often found in the company of sinners, let us go there for the same gracious purpose, to convert to repentance. On the subject of universal suffrage and annual parliaments, they said redress was not to be expected from any existing political party. Pitt had succeeded to Fox, and Fox to Pitt, without any reform being obtained. This compliment was not confined to the two great party leaders in London; for of Mr. Grattan it was equally said, that while he spoke against the Convention Bill he betrayed the liberties of his country. The late trials for seditious publications in England were bitterly censured, particularly that of Mr. Holt: the jury might have given their verdict through a corrupt medium, but the people were obliged to the judge. Such sentences were more efficacious in the cause of parliamentary reform than any essays or speeches.

Dec. 4.
Interference of
the magistracy.

When this assembly had thus continued, discussing and legislating, a little more than a month, the magistracy of Edinburgh thought it necessary to interfere. This event was not unexpected; for Mr. Margarot, a delegate from the London Corresponding Society, one of their most distinguished leaders, announced, from the chair, that men not friendly to reform, and who had an interest in supporting existing abuses, were

using every endeavour to stop their meetings; and, on his motion, it was resolved that the moment of any illegal dispersion of their body should be considered as a summons to the delegates to assemble at the place to be appointed by the Secret Committee, for a Convention of Emergency.

On the following morning, seven members, including the secretary, were apprehended, under a warrant of the sheriff, and the papers of the Convention were seized. When the assembled body were informed of this fact, some proposed to offer themselves as bail for the prisoners; but before they could depart for that purpose, the Lord Provost, with a proper force, entered, and required the chairman to descend from his position and dissolve the meeting. He refused, unless constrained, and, after a conversation, conducted on both sides with perfect good temper, the Lord Provost gently drew the President from his seat; the cry of violence, for form's sake, was raised, and the body adjourned to a place in the Canongate, where they assembled in the evening without interruption.

At their next meeting, Mr. Margarot, and his co-delegate, Joseph Gerald, were describing the treatment and the interrogatory to which they had been subjected, when the sheriff substitute, attended by the magistrates of the city and a body of constables, entered. Mr. Margarot, who was in the chair, asserted that the Convention was legal and constitutional; the public officer, without arguing the point, said he had orders to disperse them by force, if necessary, and required that the meeting should immediately be dissolved. Mr. Gerald was substituted for his colleague in the chair, the process of simulated resistance was gone through, and the meeting was terminated with a prayer. The Convention met no more; an attempt was made to collect them on the following day; but a proclamation and a little vigorous exertion by the Provost prevented it; and Mr. Skirving, their secretary, and some of the leading members, were detained for trial*.

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5th.
Arrest of
members.

A meeting dis-
solved.

6th.
Another
dispersed.

* The proceedings of the Convention, from which all the facts relating to

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Jan. 6th,
8th, to 11th.
Prosecutions
for libellous
publications.

In Scotland, as in England, many prosecutions had taken place for seditious publications and words, of which it will suffice to mention a part, rather than detail the whole. James Tytler, a chymist in Edinburgh, being cited before the Court of Justiciary for publishing a libel, fled from his bail and was outlawed. Shortly afterward, John Morton, James Anderson, and Malcolm Craig, printers, were indicted for drinking as a toast, in the barracks, in the presence of several soldiers, whom they requested to join them, "George the Third and last, and damnation to all crowned heads," and holding out to them a prospect of higher pay than they then received, if they would join a body called "Friends of the People, or a club for equality and freedom." They were all found guilty; but, having written a letter, professing sincere contrition, the court, commiserating their youth, instead of transportation, which, by the law of Scotland against the offence leasing-making, they might have inflicted, doomed them only to nine months' imprisonment†.

Aug. 30—31.
Trial of Muir.

Thomas Muir, an advocate, and a conspicuous member of the society, was indicted for having published, by distributing them, many seditious works, particularly those of Paine; and for seditious speeches and words of his own. In Dublin, he was one of the United Irishmen; early in the year, he was charged with sedition, fled to France, his recognizances were forfeited; he was outlawed, and his name expunged from the lists of the faculty. He had returned in a clandestine manner, but was discovered and arrested at Port Patrick, and his papers secured. The prisoner, as he was well qualified by education, talent, and practice, appeared as his own counsel, and shewed great cleverness in objecting to jurymen or witnesses, and scrutinizing with rigour the form of the indictment. The distribution of the books and the works imputed was proved by many witnesses; but several of them, on cross-examination, and a great number who were

them are derived, were published by themselves, and given in evidence on the trial of William Skirving.—Howell's State Trials, vol. xxiii, p. 391.

* Same, pp. 1—17.

produced for the prisoner, stated that he recommended several useful and valuable works, particularly Dr. Henry's History of England, and frequently advised his hearers to respect the law ; to avoid all acts of violence ; to maintain peace and good order ; and not to admit among them persons of suspicious character. Mr. Skirving, and several other members of the society, were among the witnesses ; but, although they might be intitled to belief in swearing to the expressions which had been uttered in their presence, they failed in shewing that he had not used those which were imputed to him by the witnesses for the Crown. His defence was eloquently composed ; he denied that his absence, when accused, wore any semblance to flight ; it was well known ; and, during a short residence he made in London, his reception by the Society of Friends of the People there, had been notified in a public advertisement. It was alleged that his return was clandestine ; and yet the person who first recognized him at Port-Patrick, and the magistrate before whom he had been taken, although in the list of witnesses for the prosecution, were not called. His general defence consisted of the topics so often resorted to on similar occasions, extracts from the works of Blackstone and other authors, recommending improvements in the manner of forming the representative body, and allusions to the often-cited opinions of the Duke of Richmond and Mr. Pitt. He analyzed, at much length, the depositions of the witnesses, and concluded with an impassioned burst of eloquence, which obtained the applause of the audience. In summing up, beside the strict view of the evidence, the Lord Justice Clerk made some strong observations on the parties who sought to reform Parliament by means of universal suffrage. " Mr. Muir," he said, " might have known " that no attention could be paid to such a rabble. " What right had they to representation ? He could " have told them that the Parliament would never " listen to their petition. How could they think of it ? " The landed interest alone had a right to be represented ; the rabble had nothing but personal pro-

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“perty, and what hold had the nation on them?
“They might pack up all their property on their
“backs, and leave the country in the twinkling of an
“eye; but landed property could not be removed*.”

The jury unanimously pronounced him guilty; the judges expressed their concurrence in the verdict; they stated that the crime would anciently have been high-treason and punished accordingly; even now, it approached it very nearly; and Lord Swinton referred to the Roman law, under which such a criminal would have been sentenced to the gibbet, cast to wild beasts, or sent into banishment. He was ordered to be transported for fourteen years†. His sentence excited great commiseration in the Convention; they passed a vote that, while he remained in Scotland, two of their members, at the public expense, should dine with him every day: it was proposed to extend the number to six; but, as this would probably have created too strong a demand upon the exchequer, it was not granted‡.

Society at
Dundee.

Sept. 12-13.
Trial of Fyshe
Palmer.

In furtherance of the general purposes, a society was formed at Dundee, calling themselves “the Friends of Liberty;” and, at one of their meetings, an Unitarian preacher, Mr. Thomas Fyshe Palmer, distributed papers which subjected him to a trial before the circuit Court of Justiciary at Perth. His counsel took objections, first to a misnomer, as his name on the record was spelt Fische, instead of Fyshe, and to the defective form of the indictment, in which, they said, no distinct offence was averred. Both these being overruled, and the usual topics drawn from Blackstone, Burke, and other authors, from the speeches and writings of the Duke of Richmond, Mr. Pitt, and many other statesmen, being exhausted, the learned judges, Lord Eskgrove and Lord Abercromby, summed up the case very strongly; the jury found the defendant guilty,

* These very injudicious expressions were animadverted upon with much severity by Mr. Fox, in the House of Commons. See, in the *New Parl. Hist.* vol. xxx. his speech on Mr. Adams's motion, March 10, 1794

† *Howell's State Trials*, vol. xxiii. p. 117.

‡ Same, pp. 396—397.

and he was sentenced to be transported for seven years.

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All the offences for which these persons were tried took place before the sitting of the Convention; but, with all possible speed after the suppression of that body, Skirving, the secretary, and Maurice Margarot, and Joseph Gerald, active and leading members, were brought to trial. After the details which have been given of the general proceedings, publications, and decrees of this body, it would be superfluous to trace through each trial the conduct of each individual. Except Sinclair, the prisoners defended themselves, all with great ability, particularly Gerald, who was a man of extraordinary talent and eloquence*. They vindicated their conduct, as intitled to honour instead of blame, justified themselves both upon principle, and the speeches, writings, and conduct of great and able men of the present and past times, and in the whole proceeding affected to treat the court with rudeness and scorn. They were all found guilty, and sentenced to be transported for fourteen years†.

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Jan. 6 and 7.
13 and 14.
March 3 to
10-11.
Trial of
Skirving,
Margarot,
and Gerald.

Another member of the Convention, Charles Sinclair, was also indicted; but as he was principally charged with attending meetings where seditious speeches were made and seditious resolutions passed, and very slightly with having promoted them himself, his counsel, Mr. Fletcher, objected to the relevancy of the indictment. The court did not agree in this view of the subject; but the Solicitor-general, considering probably, that justice would rather be injured than advanced by pressing a case where some doubt was felt, abandoned the prosecution‡.

Feb. 17-24.
March 10-14.

* An interesting account of this gentleman, coloured by the partiality of private affection, will be found in the *Memoirs of Samuel Parr, LL.D.* by Dr. John Johnstone, prefixed to his *Works*, vol. i. p. 448.

† Howell, vol. xxiii. pp. 391—673—803.

‡ Same, p. 777.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTY-FIFTH.

1794.

Meeting of Parliament.—King's speech.—Treaties produced. House of Lords.—Address moved.—Amendment moved by the Earl of Guildford.—Supporters of the address.—Amendment rejected.—House of Commons—Address moved—arguments for it—on the amendment—Lord Mornington—rejected.—Observations.—Motion of Earl Stanhope—his speech—not answered.—Motion rejected.—Motion by the Marquis of Lansdowne—arguments in support of it—answered—rejected—Motion by Mr. Whitbread.—Motion of Earl Stanhope—the Earl of Mansfield and other Peers.—The preamble omitted.—Motion expunged from the Journals.—Lord Lauderdale's motion on this proceeding.—Lord Thurlow.—Motions of the Duke of Bedford and Mr. Fox. Other debates on the conduct of the war.—Hessian troops landed.—Mr. Grey's motion—rejected.—Bill of indemnity—rejected.—Mr. Grey moves to bring in a bill—rejected. The King's message on invasion.—Mr. Dundas's plan for the volunteers—he moves an address.—Discussion on voluntary contributions.—Mr. Sheridan's motion—negatived. Motion of Lord Lauderdale.—Debate on the Volunteer Bill—clause moved by Serjeant Adair—bill passes the Lords. Inrolment of French emigrants—bill brought in—opposition on the second reading—debate on going into a committee—debate on the motion that the bill do pass.—Mr. Sheridan's motion on religious qualifications—lost.—Debate on the Sardinian treaty.—First appearance of Mr. Canning. Treaties with Prussia and Holland.—Mr. Pitt's motion.—House of Lords.—Major Maitland's motion.—Dunkirk and Toulon.—Motion on Lafayette.—Observations.—The Marquis of Lansdowne's motion on a supposed communication of Lord Dorchester.—Similar motion by Mr. Sheridan.—Finance.—Motion on sinecure and other places.—Slave

trade.—Debates on seditious practices.—Mr. Adam's motion.—opposed, and lost.—Mr. Palmer's petition—received. Mr. Whitbread's motion.—Mr. Adam's motion.—Other efforts.—Lord Lauderdale's motion.—Mr. Adam's third motion.—Proceedings of the Societies.—Arrest of several persons.—Message from the King.—Mr. Pitt moves an address.—Committee formed—their report.—Mr. Pitt's motion to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act—opposed by Mr. Fox and other members—motion carried.—Mr. Grey moves a call of the House—opposed—efforts at delay—third reading—bill passed.—Proceedings in the Lords—their first report—second reading of the bill, which passes. Protests.—House of Commons.—Second report.—Friends of the People disclaim the other societies.—House of Lords. Second report.—Address moved—agreed to—adopted by the Commons.—Termination of the sessions.

EVENTS, so momentous and extraordinary as those which have been recapitulated, could not fail of producing numerous and animated debates in Parliament. In opening the session, the King, described the present contest as one which materially affected our constitution, laws, religion, and the security of civil society. He mentioned the advantages obtained by the allied powers, in the protection of the United Provinces, and the recovery of the Austrian Netherlands. The temporary occupation of Toulon, and the circumstances attending the evacuation, had inflicted a decisive blow on the naval power of the enemy; and he spoke of his own declaration to the French people, as shewing his earnest desire to see such a peace restored as might provide for our permanent safety, and the independence and security of Europe. He acknowledged, with unspeakable satisfaction, the steady loyalty and firm attachment to the constitution, which, notwithstanding the efforts employed to mislead and seduce, had been so generally prevalent; the zeal and alacrity of the militia, and the distinguished bravery and spirit displayed by his sea and land forces, and

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Jan. 21.
Meeting of
Parliament.
King's speech.

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Treaties
produced.House of
Lords.

adverted to the true grounds and origin of the war, recommending perseverance and united exertion; their discontinuance or relaxation could hardly procure even a short interval of delusive repose, and could never terminate in security or peace.

Treaties and conventions with Spain, the two Sicilies, Prussia, the Emperor, and Portugal, and his Majesty's declaration, and that by the commissioners at Toulon, were presented to both Houses.

An address was moved by Lord Stair, and seconded by Lord Auckland, who claimed for his Majesty's speech general approbation, and recapitulated the successes of the war in the Netherlands, Nice, and Savoy, and the frustrated invasion of the Palatinate and Italy. The footing we had obtained in St. Domingo would, no doubt, be followed by an entire conquest; it was not believed that the French flag was flying in any settlement in India; and the events at Toulon would be ruinous to their marine. The new invention of raising an armed force by the operation of popular tyranny was a terrible expedient; it could not be imitated by nations who retained a respect for law, justice, and humanity; but it contained its own antidote; a rising in mass must so exhaust the country, that it could not easily be repeated. No army could be more formidable than one of robbers and murderers. To open with them a negotiation for peace, or an armistice, was a proposition big with absurdity, folly, and dishonour. No treaty could enable us to disarm. Were we to withdraw our forces, the Netherlands and the United Provinces would fall into the hands of regicide hordes, and the general confusion of Europe, and ultimately the downfall of Great Britain, must inevitably ensue.

Amendment
moved by the
Earl of
Guildford.

An amendment was moved by the Earl of Guildford, recommending peace. It was supported by the Marquis of Lansdowne and Lord Lauderdale, who maintained that the advantages we had gained would be greatly overbalanced by our expenses and commercial losses. We had already attained the point at which ministers had declared they would endeavour to

procure peace ; the Dutch were in perfect security, and the French confined within limits which ought not to be passed. The stupendous effort of rising in a mass, could only be repeated on the pressure of an invading enemy. As in the contest with America, it had been asked, were we to negotiate with a Hancock? So the present government exclaimed, were they to treat with a Robespierre? Let them ask the Duke of Brunswick! the King of Prussia! Lord Hood and Sir Gilbert Elliot! let them ask the royalist army of La Vendée; the unfortunate Lyonese, or the retreating Spaniard; all these must confess that in France there was a government; and it was greatly to be feared that it would not be long before the Prince of Saxe Cobourg and the Duke of York must make the same acknowledgment. We must treat with the ruling power. From the declaration of Lord Hood and Sir Gilbert Elliot at Toulon, and the capture of the fortified towns in the Netherlands, it might be inferred that the hope of reviving monarchy in France induced ministers to persevere; if so, the allies had let slip the only opportunity. If, when the Duke of York and the Prince of Saxe Cobourg were advancing to the interior, they had marched forward to the capital, the Convention might have trembled for their safety, the republic for its existence; but by omitting to improve this period, they enabled the republicans to destroy the only remaining friends of royalty in Brittany and La Vendée.

The Revolutionary Tribunal, it was said, did not exceed in cruelty the courts of justice in England and Scotland, where the friend had become a spy on the actions of his neighbour, and the hours of domestic conviviality subjected to a state of inquisition.

In this debate, the Duke of Portland and Earl Spencer, relinquishing the ties of party, supported the address. The Earls of Mansfield and Hardwicke and Lord Grenville vindicated the war waged with those who, by their avowed conspiracy against the general interests of mankind, rendered themselves hostes humani generis. In the instance of Cromwell, nations could treat with an usurper, whose power was perma-

Supporters of
the address.

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ment; but in France those with whom we must have negotiated some months ago, had fallen by that tyranny which themselves contributed to raise; engagements made by the Brissotines would not have been deemed obligatory by Robespierre and his adherents, nor would they who might overthrow Robespierre and his crew respect the conditions of a peace made by them. If the allies would descend to negotiate with the present men, they would be told that, by a decree of the Convention, France could not make peace with any power holding one foot of her territory; previously, therefore, to negotiation, the allies must give up all the fortresses they had taken, with Brabant, Savoy, and Nice; for they had all been affiliated; and in like manner, we must restore all their possessions in the East and West Indies. From the decision of that night, and the blessing of Providence on their councils, it was to be hoped that the restoration of order and government to France, and the preservation of the laws, the religion, and the liberties of Europe, would be effected.

Amendment
rejected.
House of Com-
mons.
Address
moved.
Arguments for
it.

On a division, the amendment was rejected*.

In the House of Commons, Lord Clifden moved an address, which was seconded by Sir Peter Burrell. On the origin of the war and intentions of the French, the supporters of government maintained the same propositions as those advanced in the upper House. To negotiate had become useless. Freed from all human and divine obligations, the French scorned to observe any condition they made, and laughed at the credulity which trusted them. Their whole conduct toward the nations on the Continent proved their intent to overthrow every established government, and erect themselves into a supreme power on the ruins of civilization.

For the
amendment.

On the other side, it was maintained that war might have been avoided. A civil war in France was inevitable, and Europe might have looked on in safety and in peace; but the treaty of Pilnitz was formed and discovered; a civil war prevented, the monarchy subverted, and the banner of Jacobinism waved triumphant.

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At this period, Great Britain was the asylum of commerce and of peace; the store-house of the world; and might have been the arbiter of Europe, but for the dreadful infatuation which embarked her in this frantic crusade of despotism and superstition against anarchy and enthusiasm. The Duke of Brunswick's proclamation and the supposed treaties of Pilnitz and Pavia were referred to as fully justifying all subsequent atrocities. Condé and Valenciennes were taken possession of, and held by the Emperor in his own name; an act which excited the indignation of every generous emigrant. Even the Abbé Maury said, at Rome, in a large company of his countrymen, "still we have one remedy; rather than allow France to be divided like Poland, let us all turn Jacobins to preserve our country."

Colonel Tarleton observed, that, after twelve months of hostility, we could only speak of paltry, feeble, and ineffectual operations, and of devoted detachments. Had a powerful body of troops been disembarked at the mouth of the Seine, marched toward Paris, while the continental allies pursued operations on the frontiers, and the partizans of the throne made exertions at Lyons, La Vendée, and elsewhere, we could have yielded them essential assistance, and our fleet, unresisted in the channel, would have protected our own trade, and injured that of the enemy.

Col. Tarleton.

In defence of the horrible barbarities perpetrated by the French, it was said, that they had only destroyed despotism and superstition; and perhaps ministers would soon refuse to treat with them, until the Catholic faith and tyranny were restored. "Who supported the cruelty, barbarity, and inhumanity of Marat, Robespierre, and Danton? Mr. Pitt. Give peace to France, and they would soon become as truly contemptible and insignificant as his Majesty's ministers themselves."

This is only a specimen of the tone and style which marked this portion of the debate; but the speeches on both sides faded into comparative unimportance

Lord Mor-
rington

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before one which was delivered by Lord Mornington; a distinguished specimen of parliamentary eloquence; its matter vigorously conceived, judiciously arranged, and supported by historical proof and illustration, while the style was elegant and classical, without the affectation of exuberant ornament, the frequent use of exclamation and interrogation, or any of the coarser figures so often resorted to for mere oratorical effect without elucidating argument or tending to conviction.

His lordship began by showing the origin of the war, the justice and necessity of which had been so amply discussed and so unequivocally declared in the last session. From the speeches and writings of the republican leaders, particularly Brissot, Condorcet, and Robespierre, he showed the avowed determination of the French government to interfere with the establishments of all other countries; and, under pretence of succouring liberty, to seize the property and incorporate the territories of the nations which should listen to their proposals; and he cited the conduct of Genet in America, and Descorches at Constantinople, to prove that, from Mr. Jefferson to the Reis Effendi, from the President of the United States to the Grand Seignor, from the Congress to the Divan, from the popular form of a republic to the most unmixed military despotism, every mode and gradation of lawful authority or of established power was the object of deliberate, systematic, and uniform attack. The negroes in Saint Domingo had been declared free, as Brissot had observed, because that measure would accomplish the destruction of all the British colonies. In Savoy, the same republican observed, Cambon wanted to unite every thing that he might sell every thing; thus he forced the union of Savoy and of Nice. In the Netherlands, five hundred thousand livres (£20,000) were issued to make the mob of Brussels drunk, and buy proselytes to the principles of union in all states. With a similar combination of duplicity, with grasping ambition and avarice, the French had acted with respect to the navigation of the Scheldt and the invasion

of Holland, all tending to support their established maxim, that France ought to know no barrier to the eastward but the Rhine.

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From the same evidence, the declarations of the enemy in periods of mutual reproach and crimination, his lordship proved that the aggression on the part of England was a mere fiction, and that the French had planned, prepared, and arranged all the circumstances which led to the rupture. He displayed the hopes they avowed of naval captures, and their entire disappointment; and he dwelt, with patriotic satisfaction, on the successes of our arms in India, Newfoundland, and the West Indies.

He then took a luminous view of the late transactions in France, beginning with the revolution of the thirty-first of May, and observing, that a recital of all the shocking and disgusting scenes which attended every part of them would lead to a detail wholly unfit for the ears of a British House of Commons. He then adverted to the financial state of France, and considered their plunder of the churches, for the sake of the gold and silver plate, as tending to display a most distinguished feature of the revolutionary government, the formal abolition of religion; their extravagant follies and eccentric crimes were not more distinguished by absurdity and magnitude, than by their novelty and singularity. In the festival of reason, and other horrible declarations and orgies which had distinguished the last year, the Old and New Testaments were publicly burnt, as prohibited books! modes of burial were devised to inculcate that death was only an everlasting sleep; and it was publicly maintained, that the idea of a supreme God was inconsistent with the liberty of man.

He displayed the enslaved and degraded state into which the people were brought, under the pretext of liberty, equality, and justice; the laws respecting the maximum, those against suspected persons, the accumulation and cruel treatment of state prisoners, the Revolutionary Tribunal, the revolutionary army, and the massacres which disgraced all parts of the republic,

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and then, with expressions of warm satisfaction, adverted to the striking contrast of our own situation, in finance, public credit, agriculture, commerce, the mode of recruiting the army, security of property, the enjoyment of individual freedom, justice allied with mercy, and liberty with law. He deprecated all premature efforts at peace, urging the acts, the decrees, and declarations of the Convention, and the avowed principles and intents of their rulers; their pretensions, that the limits of France were marked by nature in four points, the ocean, the Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees, and that peace must never be made until her dominions had reached those natural boundaries. The leading French legislators proclaimed their hopes that the people of England would, before long, rise and demand the convocation of an assembly where there should be no mention of "my lords," or "gentlemen." Barrère, in his reports to the Convention, declared the necessity for revolutionizing and destroying England; comparing London to Carthage, the scourge of Italy, to an ulcer which wasted the strength of the Continent, an excrescence which liberty was bound to destroy. "May England be ruined! May England be annihilated! ought to be the conclusion of every revolutionary decree of the Convention." "You are now," his lordship said, "to make your option; to decide whether you will rely for existence on the arbitrary will of a restless and implacable enemy, or on your own sword; or whether you will deliver over the guardianship of all these blessings to the justice of Cambon, the moderation of Danton, the religion of Robespierre, or the friendship of Barrère; or, finally, to whatever may be the accidental caprice of any new band of malefactors, who, in the last convulsions of their exhausted country, may be destined to drag the present tyrants to their own scaffolds, to seize their lawless power, to emulate the depravity of their example, and to rival the enormity of their crimes."

Mr. Sheridan.

Mr. Sheridan, who was the first to animadvert on this speech, said it was more remarkable for ability than brevity, and in ironical terms complimented Lord

Mornington for his copious quotations of French party speeches, and the tone and emphasis with which he had recited them. We had been brought into war by repeated declamations on all that the frenzy, folly, and rashness of individuals in France had said or written, by which the passions of this country could be roused, or their fears excited, and therefore the noble lord imagined that a repetition of the same means was best calculated to produce a continuance of the proceeding. But the eternal and unalterable truth was, that a long-established despotism had so far degraded and debased human nature, as to render its subjects, on the first recovery of their rights, unfit for the exercise of them.

On the conduct of the French toward America, he agreed in condemning the outrages of Genet; the indecent insults he offered to General Washington; his erection of Jacobin clubs; his establishing consular tribunals for the judgment of prizes, and other irregular acts. "But what has been the event of all these heinous and repeated provocations? America remains neutral; with a wisdom, prudence, and magnanimity which we disdain, she thrives in a state of envied tranquillity, and is hourly clearing the paths to unbounded opulence; America has monopolized the commerce and the advantages which we have abandoned."

In the terms generally used in Paris to inflame the people and justify the Jacobins, he recapitulated all the acts imputed to Great Britain since the beginning of the revolution, censuring them, and maintaining the pacific and friendly disposition, the moderation and forbearance of the French. He maintained the possibility of peace, but ministers had not a sincere desire to obtain it. He then treated at large on the state of France, and of the Austrian and Prussian armies. Defeat had thinned their ranks, and disgrace had broken their spirit. They had been driven across the Rhine by French recruits, like sheep before the lions' whelp. "Where now," he said, "is the scientific confidence with which we are taught to regard the effects of discipline and experience,

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“ when opposed to unrestrained multitudes and un-
“ practised generals? The jargon of professional pedan-
“ try is mute, and the plain sense of man is left to
“ its own course.” In a similar tone, he contemned
the efforts of our other allies; the Dutch, the Portu-
guese, the Italian States, whom we had bribed or
bullied; our great ally, the Empress of Russia, who
had contributed nothing to the common cause, except
her praises and her prayers. But, independently of
all these considerations, was it nothing that the great
and momentous experiment had been made, and
that the people of a single nation, roused by a new
and animating energy, and defending what they
conceived to be their liberty, had proved a match
for the enmity and arms of the world? He did not
mean to propose an amendment, but should support
any one, the object of which was to declare that
we ought to treat for peace at the earliest available
opportunity.

It would seem that this intimation was not made
without preconcert; for, after a few observations from
Mr. Windham, who vindicated the masterly, true, and
alarming speech of Lord Mornington, and from Mr.
Dundas, who noticed the state of the naval service, Mr.
Fox proposed an amendment, similar in its import to
that moved by the Earl of Guildford. He thanked Lord
Mornington for declaring, in explicit terms, that while
the present or any other Jacobin government should exist
in France, we could neither offer nor receive propositions
for peace. He treated the noble Lord’s peroration as
not altogether new, but borrowed from speeches and re-
ports in the Convention. He had asked what depen-
dence could be had on the religion of a Robespierre, the
justice of a Cambon, or the moderation of a Danton?
The answer of the French Convention to His Majesty’s
declaration, appealed, in terms not decent to be men-
tioned in that House, to the wisdom of one monarch,
the good faith of another, and the chastity of a third.
In terms similar to those of Mr. Sheridan, he apolo-
gised for the grate crimes committed in France, where
an old despotism had been overthrown, and a free

government introduced. Then language was ransacked, and declamation exhausted, to rouse our indignation, and excite us to war against the whole people. In Poland, liberty was subverted, that fair portion of the creation seized by the relentless fangs of despotism; the wretched inhabitants reduced to the same situation with the other slaves of their new masters, and, in order to add insult to cruelty, enjoined to sing *Te Deum* for the blessing thus conferred on them; and what did all this produce? Sometimes a well-turned sentence to express our sorrow, or mark our disapprobation. The hatred of this country expressed by the French, their declaration that we were their natural enemies, the contriving of schemes, and sending emissaries to overthrow our constitution, were no more than had been done by Louis the Fourteenth; had our new-fangled politicians lived in those times, they would never have made the treaty of Ryswick.

He noticed, with great force, the difficulties which, in a negotiation for peace, would arise from the position in which the allies had placed themselves, and the promises from the performance of which they had withdrawn. Some reached to the full re-establishment of the old system; others only to the constitution of 1789; at Toulon, we had promised and restored that constitution; Louis the Seventeenth was styled King of the French, and all the authorities appointed by the constitution of 1789 were re-established. Wurmser, on the contrary, in Alsace, dismissed all persons appointed to offices under the same constitution, and restored, till further orders, the ancient system, which we are apt to call despotic. Supposing, for the sake of argument (a thing too absurd to be supposed in any other way), that France were brought to absolute submission; would ministers restore all they might have taken while reducing her to that state? No: there must be an indemnification for the expense of our services. "As rich as a king;" "as happy as a king;" and many of the same sort, were common sayings: the phrase, "as grateful as a king," was not yet proverbial; but were Louis the Seventeenth

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to be as grateful as this country could desire, yet he must be subject to the voice of his people; and France, to recover what she had lost, would seize the first opportunity of attacking us, when we might possibly have no ally but Holland, and when Prussia or Austria might be leagued against us.

To make the success of the campaign a matter of boast in the King's speech, was the highest pitch of recorded effrontery. A professed object of the war had been the overthrow of Jacobinism; but that had surmounted all other factions, and there was not an insurrection in any part of the republic. He reviewed, with severe censure, the conduct of the war; particularly the occupation and surrender of Toulon, which had been purchased by compromise and lost with disgrace, in a manner entirely new to the British character; we had proved ourselves neither useful as friends, nor respectable as enemies. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, with all his talents and eloquence, and his long retention of office, must now resort to the very lowest class of his flatterers to collect thirty men around his own table who would style him a great war minister.

Mr. Pitt.

Mr. Pitt observed that the proposed amendment amounted to little less than a negative of the address. He vindicated the war, which had not been hastily and rashly engaged in, but, after due and mature conviction, and had been sanctioned by the votes of Parliament and the general opinion of the great body of the nation. He described the grounds of it under four heads; first, that the system of the French had developed principles destructive to the general order of society and subversive of all regular government. Secondly, that with a view of extending their system, they had usurped the territory of other states. Thirdly, the hostile intentions they had shewn against Holland. Fourthly, their disclosed views of aggrandizement and ambition, entirely new, and menacing the independence of this country and the security of Europe. Unless it could be shewn that we were originally mistaken; that these were not proper causes of contest; or that our object

in resisting were already gained; the obligations and necessity which originally induced us to undertake the war, would still operate with equal force.

He then recapitulated the history of the rulers of France, as taken from their speeches, records, and decrees. From the nature of their government, there could be no dependence on the characters of whom it was composed. The shifting of persons took place like the shifting of scenes; but the conduct of the drama continued the same, or was distinguished in its progress only by increasing gradations of wickedness. He recited the crimes and enormities of the revolutionary government, set up after the thirty-first of May, and ascribed their recent military successes to a system of restraint and oppression, the most terrible and gigantic that had, perhaps, ever existed.

It had been asked, whether he would ever make peace with the Jacobins? It would not be prudent or rational in him to give a definitive reply; but he denied that we might place as much dependence on the good faith of the present government of France as on that of Louis the Fourteenth. In him and his court a high sentiment of honour prevailed, and his ambition was limited within certain bounds; but the present rulers, exempt from all such principles, banished all restraints, and, with an ambition more insatiable, had at their disposal means of destruction much more formidable than that monarch ever possessed. He recapitulated the argument of Lord Mornington on the decrees of the Convention, and depicted the abject and contemptible condition in which we should place ourselves by attempting to treat, subject to their preliminary condition. There was no appearance that they would recede from their declarations. To whatever pitch of extravagance they had reached in what they said, they always outstript it by what they did. "We are called, "in the present age," he said, "to witness the political and moral phenomenon of a mighty and civilized people, formed into an artificial horde of banditti, "throwing off all the restraints which have influenced "men in social life, displaying a savage valour, di-

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“rected by a sanguinary spirit, forming rapine and
“destruction into a system, and perverting to their
“detestable purposes all the talents and ingenuity
“which they derived from their advanced stage of ci-
“vilization, all the refinements of art, and the disco-
“veries of science. We behold them uniting the
“utmost savageness and ferocity of design, with con-
“summate contrivance and skill in execution, and
“seemingly engaged in no less than a conspiracy to
“exterminate from the face of the earth all honour,
“humanity, justice and religion. In this state, can
“there be any question but to resist where resistance
“alone can be effectual, until, by the blessing of Pro-
“vidence, we shall have secured the independence of
“this country and the general interests of Europe.”

Amendment
rejected.

Observations.

On a division, the amendment was rejected by a large majority*.

This debate imparted its tinge and colour to the general proceedings of the session, whenever the war, alliances, or military preparations came under discussion. If ministers were deemed overweening in their confidence of speedy success, or too fond of recapitulating the daily increasing horrors and atrocities of the French government; still, in advancing the cause and supporting the dignity of their country, they were better considered and more kindly regarded than their opponents, who undervalued our military and naval exploits, exaggerated our failures, and vilified our allies, while they palliated the enormities, extolled the successes, and apologized for the crimes of our declared and implacable enemies. This tone of debating was the natural sequel of that which had been adopted during the American war, when a claim to patriotism was founded on a perpetual applause and undisguised wish for the success of our enemies; but, at the present time, however desirable peace might be, it was revolting to the national feeling to seek it by humiliating advances; and could the question submitted to Parliament have been made one of general suffrage through the nation, the majority would pro-

* 277 to 59.

bably have been greater among the people than even among their representatives. Nor is it easy to conceive that for any other than party purposes, men well informed of the temper, taste, and principles of those who governed France, could have uttered so many declamations to urge a pursuit of peace, which the enemy was not, on any terms, disposed to grant. On an intimation that a congress for a pacification might be held at the Hague, in which ministers from France might be admitted, and that indirect overtures had been made by ministers of the Allies to the French resident in Switzerland for a truce, during which a form of government might be settled, and a treaty might be formed, the committee of Public Safety decreed that these were insidious propositions, connected with plots in the interior, and contrived to divide the Convention, cause them to lay down their arms, and suffer the revolutionary ardour to cool; and they haughtily rejected them, without having so much as made a previous communication to the legislature. Afterward, Barrère, in a report from the committee, attributed the desire of peace, expressed in some quarters, in the first place to external enemies, and next, to aristocrats, modérés, the rich, the descendants of the privileged classes; to the friends of conspirators; to timid, pusillanimous souls; to bad citizens and pretended patriots. "Monarchies," he said, "want peace; the republic, warlike energy; peace is necessary to slaves; the fermentation of liberty to republics; governments require repose; to the French republic, revolutionary activity is wanted." This congenial declamation was printed and sent to the armies; and shortly afterward the same orator, returning to the subject, again mentioned the intimation to their minister in Switzerland, as a crafty attempt to divide the patriots; and attributed to the monarchs of Europe a genius for conspiracy, derived from the baleful ghosts of Brissot and the executed federalists*.

Jan. 22.

Feb. 1.

Several motions on the subject of war and nego-

* *Homme d'État*, tome ii. p. 456; *Moniteur* on the days denoted.

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Motion of
Earl Stanhope.

tiation will require a notice less detailed. In pursuance of a promise, made on the first day of the session, Earl Stanhope moved for an address, entreating the King, in his equity and justice, immediately to acknowledge the French republic, as a foundation for a speedy reconciliation and lasting peace. Ministers, he said, had deceived the country by pretending that the French, unaided, had neither arms, gunpowder, men, nor money to carry on the war. There was more silver, more gold, and more bullion in France than in all the rest of Europe. The assignats, in a speculative point of view, were worth more than English bank notes; they were, at this moment, advanced forty per cent. above the value they bore six months ago; and, in another six months they might make a similar advance. Thus a bank note for ten pounds would, in six months, be worth only ten pounds, while an assignat of that amount might be worth thirty. The French could renew their armies after a defeat; but the British nation could not be raised *en masse*, for government would not venture to trust the people with arms. The French could never want supplies; they had already taken the King's civil list, and a good deal from the clergy, and might take much more. They had already obtained from individuals enough to pay the expense of the next campaign; and resources of this nature were almost infinite among them. They had taken bells and cast them into cannon, which was making them more useful to the republic than when they were dangling in steeples. Their silver saints, too, they had pressed into the service, and had found their assistance beneficial. A new generation had arisen during the revolution, not like its first movers, friends to a limited monarchy, but pure republicans. Dubois Crancé had said, in the Jacobin club, "Let us expel every man who cannot prove an act which, if there were a counter-revolution, would entitle him to be hanged." "I am," said his lordship, "ready to be hanged or guillotined for the cause of liberty myself." Adverting then to the charge of atheism advanced against the French people, he maintained that the aristocrats, and

not the sansculottes, were the atheists; and if religion had been treated with levity, it was occasioned by the clergy themselves more than by any other class of men; they made it a mere trade, for the purpose of deluding the populace; and, by fanaticism, maintained a system for the most infamous purposes. This would be evident by a list of the tools of their trade, which had been taken in a camp belonging to some of the royalists.

At this point, the Bishop of Durham interfered, observing, that such sentiments might, perhaps, be well apapted for the amusement of the National Convention, or the Club of Jacobins, but appeared to him to have no connexion with the intended motion.

Thus reprehended, Earl Stanhope speedily concluded; a speech so eccentric received no answer or refutation. Lord Abingdon observed, that the best argument against it was a good horse-laugh; Lord Darnley declared that the minister who should propose to treat for, or to accept peace with the French government, would deserve to lose his head; and the motion was negatived.

With arguments better conceived, and with the method and force of a statesman, the Marquis of Lansdowne moved for an address, representing the improbability of conquering France, the dilatoriness and feebleness of operation inseparable from the confederacy formed against her; and that, from the exhausted finances of our allies, they could only fulfil their engagements when subsidized by us. Several other propositions were introduced relating to the acquisition of territory; the interruption of commerce, which prevented the reduction of debt; the dismemberment of France, injurious to the balance of power; the ambitious policy of the allies, which threatened the extinction of the independent states of the second and third order, upon whose preservation the liberties of Europe essentially depend; the impossibility of controlling, by arms, opinions and sentiments once widely disseminated, and the obedience paid by the French people to their provisional government; and therefore imploring

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Not answered.

Motion
rejected.

Feb. 17.
Motion by
the Marquis
of Lansdowne.

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Arguments in
support of it.

his Majesty to declare, without delay, his disposition to make peace upon just, disinterested, and liberal terms, and to communicate such declaration to his allies.

In support of this motion, the Duke of Grafton, the Earl of Guildford, and the Earl of Lauderdale, spoke; but the principal strength of the debate was in the argument of the mover. Few propositions were advanced that had not been previously used. A general desire of peace was said to be prevalent; and, in considering our treaties and alliances, it was observed, that Spain would be jealous of our acquisitions in the West Indies, as favouring a contraband intercourse with her own establishments. Prussia, it was obvious, had no political relations which could interest her to continue the war. The cabinet of Vienna had not so changed its object, that Europe had no longer any thing to dread from its unbounded ambition. Our next great ally, the Empress of Russia, the Colossus of Europe, as she had been called, had been suffered, through an unpardonable countenance of her ambition, by our ministers, to take possession of all the west of Poland. Instead of sending troops to aid the confederacy, she had been building fortresses, that, as soon as her rivals were properly exhausted, she might be able to attack her devoted victim the Turk. Holland had not sent a single ship to sea, and their army only afforded a striking example of the difference between men engaged in defence of their own liberties and those drawn in to fight against others. From the King of Sardinia, much could not be expected; he might be an honest man; but he was weak and exhausted. A confederacy so heterogeneous could not be expected to keep together.

With respect to neutral nations, many observations were made on the conduct of Lord Hervey to the Grand Duke of Tuscany; our attempts on Sweden, Denmark, and Switzerland, were equally censured; but our treatment of America—our sister people; our natural child; our friend, who spoke our language, tied to us by every affection—had been marked with such outrage, such blackness of guilt, that men almost

shuddered to examine it. The order of the sixth of November had been made without consulting the American merchants; but by what subtlety had it happened that the Algerines had been made to declare against them? Was there no suspicion that the Indians had been let loose upon the States? From the poverty of our allies, we must ultimately be the general paymaster; and, for indemnity, we might expect a miserable West India island or two: these colonies, since the independence of America, had lost their value; and the example of the French, who had given freedom and arms to the blacks, as means of war, would be contagious, and render the West India islands a burthen. The French, too, had turned their attention to their marine, and experience had shewn what they were capable of achieving.

This motion was opposed by Earl Fitzwilliam, the Earls of Carnarvon and Darnley, the Duke of Leeds, Lord Sydney, the Earls of Kinnoul and Carlisle, and Lord Grenville; but such is the difference, in a debate, between the vigour of attack and the caution of defence, that the arguments on the one side, if better supported by reason, will not, in oratorical effect, compete with those on the other. They who answer accusation, must make no assertions which are not bounded by strict truth, and guarded by scrupulous caution; refutation will often appear like palliation or evasion; their adversaries may deal, without reserve, in assertions of delinquency and in prophecies of evil; their statements, if partially true, will be deemed unanswerable, and their prognostications will be viewed as the result of commendable fear; but any such attempt on the part of their antagonists will bear the imputation of malice, or the censure of vain glory, arrogance, and presumption. If they state undoubted facts, or advance irresistible axioms, they are treated as stale and threadbare; if they make assertions in vindication of their own conduct, they are doubted, or set down as interested or fallacious; and their recitals of the enormities of the enemy are cavilled at as question-

Answered.

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able, or ridiculed as mere rhetorical effusion or inapplicable declamation.

The present motion, it was said, called on his Majesty, in direct violation of all treaties, to abandon the common cause. Our object in the war was purely defensive; and on its success the existence of every thing valuable depended. The conduct of M. Chauvelin, and the behaviour of government toward him, were again explained and vindicated. We could have no hopes of peace with France, unless, as had been lately said in the National Convention, we would give up our constitution, disband our army, or quit the territory of the republic; and then, what reliance could be placed on the promises of a people without religion, morality, honour, or virtue? The Deity, by name, they had degraded; denied his existence; then tolerated him; then admitted him a member of the Jacobin club.

The effect of the last campaign on the condition of France was displayed. They were driven from Williamstadt, and finally out of Austrian Flanders; their commerce was annihilated, and the seas cleared of their cruisers; their grand fleet in the Mediterranean destroyed, their navy crippled, and their principal arsenal rendered useless; while almost all the ports in Europe were shut against them, and to all this were to be added, possessions wrested from them in the East and West Indies. Such successes were unparalleled in the history of any other first campaign.

Our intention toward neutral nations was, to prevent them from supplying the enemy, under the pretext of a simulated neutrality, with materials for carrying on the war; on this subject the language of the cabinet had been that of moderation, good temper, and firmness; and if, notwithstanding such remonstrances, they still persisted, the arm of war ought to be brought in aid, to suppress collusive dealings. As to America, far from being disposed to go to war with us, if she departed from her neutrality, it would most probably be on the side of the allies.

A division showed the opinion of the House very decidedly against the motion*.

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In the House of Commons, Mr. Whitbread moved resolutions, varying from those of the Marquis of Lansdowne in form, but not differing in their effect; and, in introducing them, he repeated the observations so often advanced against the invectives which had been so copiously and successfully used to persuade the people to concur in the present unfortunate war, reiterating the accustomed observations on the unnatural union of Austria and Prussia, the manifesto of the Duke of Brunswick, the treaty of Pilnitz, the schemes of the Empress of Russia, the hostilities of all these powers to the limited monarchical constitution of 1789†, on Poland and Sardinia, and on the benefits of neutrality, which our government might have secured, but had foregone the opportunity.

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March 6.
Motion by Mr.
Whitbread.

Mr. Jenkinson said that the convention of Pilnitz was formed only to rescue the French monarch from his captivity, and enable him, in conjunction with the states of France, to adopt a beneficial constitution; but when he announced his free acceptance of that which had been made, the Emperor declared the object of the convention fulfilled; a French ambassador was received at Vienna, and the conduct of the Emperor toward the French emigrants at Treves and Cologne showed the sincerity of his pacific professions. He justified, on the usual grounds, the conduct of Prussia and of Great Britain. It was absurd to talk of a territory so distant as Poland, when there were the greatest apprehensions of danger so near home. "While we lament the misfortunes of that country," he said, "let us look to ourselves; let us endeavour to extinguish the flames of discord prevailing in France, and then we have a chance of peace on rational and permanent grounds."

Mr. Jenkinson.

Mr. Fox renewed and enforced many of the statements which had been made concerning Austria and Prussia. On the conduct of this power toward Poland, his censure was unmitigated and just; and, while he

Mr. Fox.

* 103 to 13.

† More properly of 1791; but as the speakers on both sides distinguished it by this date, I have so left it unaltered.

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censured ministers for refusing to negotiate with France on account of her bad faith, while they all could form alliances with Austria and Prussia, however profligate and faithless they might be, he maintained that if the Frenchman looked to Poland, he would see that nothing short of the partition of France would satisfy his enemies; and could he then be expected to risk his life by rising in opposition to the Convention? Should France be subdued (an event utterly improbable), the whole kingdom might not be sufficient to indemnify all the powers at war; and then we must have to fight for the division of the spoil, without even that delusive calm which had been said to be all that could now be obtained by a treaty of peace.

Mr. Pitt.

Mr. Pitt observed, that if the House and the country continued to think that the war was originally undertaken to repel aggression, and to secure our dearest and most important interests, and that we had allies who concurred with us in the same purpose, they would be of opinion that, instead of seeking to abandon, we ought by all means to cement and confirm, our alliances. Even were our prospects of success as bad as had been represented, we had no alternative. He had never hesitated to express disapprobation of the treatment of Poland; but the question was, whether we should allow one act of injustice to deprive us of the aid of our allies, in resisting a system of intolerable injustice, established in France, and attempted to be introduced into every other country.

After a short reply from Mr. Whitbread, his motion was rejected by a great majority*.

April 4.
Motion of Earl
Stanhope.

Undismayed by his former failure, Earl Stanhope proposed a resolution on the war and our interference in the internal government of France, for the discussion of which he had obtained a call of the House. It was founded on a supposed observation of the Earl of Mansfield, which he characterised as repugnant to every principle of humanity, religion, and social duty; that the ministers of this country ought to interfere, in every possible manner, to excite civil war in France; in other

words, to use bribery and corruption in withdrawing Frenchmen from the allegiance due to their government; and this, not for the purpose of assisting this country, but of establishing a government directly opposed to the will of the majority. His speech was a strange farrago of perverted sentiments and misapplied reading. He quoted passages from a sermon by the Bishop of Norwich, then present, from the Commentaries of Blackstone, and from Lord Hawkesbury's Essay on the Rights of Neutral Nations; he cited one from the Holy Scriptures, to show that the Almighty was displeased with the Israelities for desiring a king, and the evil which would result to them from such an appointment*; and he concluded his desultory speech with a quotation from a poem by Dr. Porteus, Bishop of London.

The Earl of Mansfield declared the true meaning of his misrepresented words to be, that if any considerable number of persons in France were willing to engage with us in rescuing their country from the horrors of anarchy, by the restoration of monarchy, any sum of money, however considerable, would be beneficially employed in promoting such an end. Lord Grenville reprehended the noble mover for suffering his passions to get the better of his reason. His object was evident: he would not adopt the customary form of a motion, because in the shape of a resolution he could record his sentiments in the journals; but he advised that the journals should not be tainted by the insertion of such matter. The Lord Chancellor trusted that the resolution would not even be read from the woolsack. Its language, in any other place, would have called down the punishment of the law, and he therefore would omit the preamble, and only put the resolution. Lord Stanhope objected to such an alteration being made, when no amendment had been proposed; but in that form it was put and negatived, and, on the motion of Lord Grenville, expunged from the Journals.

The Earl of Mansfield and other peers.

The preamble omitted.

Motion expunged from the Journals.

On this transaction, Lord Lauderdale moved, in the

Lord Lauderdale's motion

* 1 Samuel, c. viii. and c. xii, v. 19.

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on this pro-
ceeding

words of the standing order, “ that any motion ought “ to be put in the words of the mover, and the question “ of content or not content decided upon it in that “ form. The Speaker,” he said, “ was the servant of “ the House, its instrument and its organ, while offici- “ ally addressing them from the woollack ; but if a “ motion were the most absurd that fancy could sug- “ gest, it should be submitted in the precise language “ of the mover, and, if unfit to be heard, disposed of by “ the previous question ; but the House had not a “ right, much less any individual peer, to alter its con- “ struction or vary its terms.”

Lord Thurlow.

Lord Thurlow acquired thanks, and the applause of the House, by vindicating the Lord Chancellor. He had often acted, he said, in the same manner, to withdraw an indiscreet mover from censure ; yet, as he had some doubt on the propriety of expunging the proposition on the day when it had been advanced, and did not think it necessary that, by adopting the resolution then proposed, the House should vote a truism, he moved the previous question ; but Lord Grenville, severely reprehending Earl Stanhope, changed it into one of adjournment, which was carried without a division.

Motions of
the Duke of
Bedford and
Mr. Fox.

At an advanced period of the session, attempts were renewed to obtain declarations favourable to peace, and expressing disapprobation of the origin and conduct of the war. On the same day, Mr. Fox and the Duke of Bedford moved a series of fourteen resolutions in the same words, condemning the proceedings of England and all her allies during the revolution, more particularly after the 10th of August, 1792, in negotiation, in the field, and in the cabinet, and asserting that, in consequence of the events of the war, on the Continent and elsewhere, all supposed views of aggrandizement and ambition on the part of the French were evidently unattainable, and must be relinquished ; and that, therefore, the object of the war, as originally professed on our part, might be secured ; the French would be content with the possession and safety of their own country ; and we might adhere to our professed

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principles of justice and policy, by abstaining from any interference with their internal affairs. Except some allusions to the transactions of the campaign which had already commenced, it is not too much to say that the debates displayed no feature of novelty. In the House of Commons, the motion was disposed of by the previous question; in the House of Lords, by one of adjournment; and divisions took place on each*. The principal distinguishing features of the debate were a most able speech by the Duke of Bedford, and an altercation between Mr. Pitt and Mr. Sheridan, in which expressions of mutual contempt were used, such as no licence of debate could warrant. The Speaker impartially declared both parties disorderly, and censured himself for not having interrupted Mr. Sheridan, with whom the unjustifiable expressions originated.

Other discussions arose as to the mode and expense of conducting the war, the treaties by which it was proposed to give it vigour and effect, and the altered aspect of affairs produced by the progress of the campaign.

By a message to the House of Commons, his Majesty announced that a corps of Hessian troops, taken into his service, had been disembarked, and stationed in the isle of Wight, Portsmouth, and places adjacent, to prevent sickness, from their remaining too long on board the transports.

Mr. Grey moved, that it was contrary to the principles of the constitution for the King to introduce foreign troops, without parliamentary sanction. He was desirous that the right of the Crown should be asserted or denied by an express resolution; and hoped the point would not be avoided by the previous question. The motion produced a long debate, in which the opposition party so little relished their position, that Mr. Serjeant Adair expressed a wish that the motion had not been made; and Mr. Fox declared that he never recollected a question which had given rise to

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Other debates
on the con-
duct of the
war.

Jan. 27.
Hessian troops
landed.

Feb. 10.
Mr. Grey's
motion.

* House of Lords, 113 to 13—House of Commons, 208 to 55.

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so much extraneous matter, or to so great a variety of abstract arguments.

Mr. Grey said, these Hessians were not under military law. The moment they landed in England, they were ipso facto discharged and disbanded; and were any of them to desert or disobey orders, there was no law by which they could be tried. If the King had power to introduce an unlimited number of foreign mercenaries to overawe and subdue us, we might as well declare at once "that the revolution " was nothing more than a successful rebellion; that " passive obedience and non-resistance were the best of " doctrines; that opposition to sovereign power, at " any time and under any circumstances, was an oppo- " sition to the ordinance of God; that the actions of " tyrants were not to be examined by the people, for " that sovereigns are God's vicegerents on earth, and " accountable only to him for their actions; that under " any oppression whatever, resistance was a crime, and " obedience a duty of the subject."

Mr. Windham.

In mentioning the Bill of Rights, Mr. Grey had claimed that it should be construed liberally; Mr. Windham contended that by implication, it left provision for the exigencies of war; for the words prohibiting the maintaining of a standing army, are put most emphatically, "in time of peace." He confessed himself at a loss to determine what was meant by "liberally." Was it that every construction tending to abridge the prerogative was to be considered liberal, while, on the contrary, all constructions, however just, which went to confirm or leave it untouched, were to be deemed illiberal?

Mr. Francis.

Mr. Francis thought that even Mr. Grey and his own friends had viewed the Bill of Rights too narrowly. It declared that the raising or maintaining a standing force in time of peace, without the consent of Parliament, was against law. What force? A native force certainly. The force which they had seen maintained by James the Second. They applied their remedy to the grievance. "If the contrary construction is right

“ where is our security? the King, by his undoubted
 “ prerogative, as I hear it perpetually affirmed, but I
 “ utterly deny it to be so, can make war at his pleasure.
 “ What then have ministers to do but to excite or
 “ create a quarrel, which is always at their command,
 “ and then they may bring any foreign force into the
 “ kingdom. If it be lawful to introduce four thousand
 “ Hessians to-day, why not ten thousand Austrians to-
 “ morrow, and twenty thousand Russians the day fol-
 “ lowing? A base, corrupt, and abject people, when
 “ once they are properly frightened—sufficiently alarmed,
 “ will submit to any thing for the sake of being de-
 “ fended.”

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Such was the tone, rather than the substance, of a debate, which terminated, contrary to the express wishes of the mover, in the rejection of the previous question by a great majority*.

Motion
rejected.

In pursuance of a suggestion by Mr. Fox, the Earl of Albemarle brought into the upper House a bill to indemnify those who had advised his Majesty to land these troops. The noble Earl was in his twenty-second year, and this, his first parliamentary effort, acquired the applause of Earl Spencer and the Marquis of Lansdowne, who complimented him on an unequalled first display.

Feb. 21.
Bill of
indemnity.

The Earl of
Albemarle.

Referring to the Bill of Rights, he contended that what was declared to be illegal in time of peace, ought to be deemed still more so in time of war. By the act of settlement, none but native subjects could hold any trust, civil or military; consequently, the command of these troops by foreign officers, being a military trust, was illegal; not less so was the landing and keeping the private soldiers, by the mutiny act. To shew that an indemnity was necessary, he referred to precedents from 1745 to 1784, and to a resolution in the House of Commons in 1641, declaring that “ those who
 “ should recommend to his Majesty the employment
 “ of foreign troops within this realm, should be punished
 “ as enemies to the constitution.”

* 184 to 35.

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On the motion for a second reading, it was observed that this resolution was only an opinion, not a law, and it was made before the revolution, the period when our constitution had taken its present glorious form. His Majesty could not employ these troops in actual service, without the sanction of Parliament; but in the present instance, a body of foreigners intended for foreign service had been landed, for a time only, for preservation against sickness. To this it was replied that a large as well as a small body might be introduced under the same pretext, and the kingdom invaded by a hundred thousand sick Hessians as well as by ten thousand.

Bill rejected.

It seemed that as no actual grievance existed, the abstract principle was not worthy of a parliamentary enactment. The bill was rejected*, and two protests were placed on the journals; one, in six articles, by Earl Stanhope; the other, in one only, by the Earl of Romney.

March 14.
Mr. Grey
moves to bring
in a Bill.

After these decisions, it might have been supposed that the question was at rest; but when three weeks had elapsed, Mr. Grey returned to it by moving for leave to bring in a bill under the same title with that which the House of Lords had rejected. It is difficult to conceive that there could be any motive for this attempt, except that of creating a debate. Nothing had occurred to favour a supposition that, even if the bill were to pass the lower House, the peers would so suddenly, and without any visible cause, recede from their expressed opinions and record their own errors; and Mr. Grey confessed that, after the arguments he had urged on a former day, he had nothing new to advance. The debate, in fact, turned entirely on the supposition that foreign troops might be introduced to subvert the constitution and establish despotic power. Mr. Sheridan adverted to Lord Stafford, who, when he commanded an army against Scotland, being told that it was illegal, answered, that he would hang any lawyer who dared to tell him so. If he were a magistrate, he

Mr. Sheridan.

should not hesitate to disperse those foreigners, as an illegal and tumultuous rabble. If, in an interval of Parliament, fifty thousand foreign troops were to land, would the responsibility of the minister be a sufficient apology? He should not be forward in moving an impeachment against a gentleman at the head of fifty thousand soldiers. A previous notice of the measure was no sufficient security; for while the members were debating it, the lobby might be filled with foreign mercenaries.

Mr. Serjeant Adair and Mr. Fox argued the general propositions already advanced, and were answered by Mr. Anstruther and Mr. Pitt, and the motion was rejected*.

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Serjeant Adair
and other
members.
Motion re-
jected.

In a committee on the army estimates, the conduct of the war on the Continent was severely arraigned by Major Maitland and Mr. Fox, and ably defended by Mr. Jenkinson and by Mr. Pitt, who, in answering some observations relating to the expedition against Dunkirk, pronounced a high and well-merited eulogium on the Duke of York; but, as no motion was made, the discussion could be considered only as an expression of opinions.

March 3.

Shortly afterward, a message from the King announced that, for the purpose of more effectually guarding against any attempt which the enemy might make to execute their professed design of invading the kingdom, he had ordered a further augmentation of his land forces, and intended to take measures, in case of emergency, to assemble speedily a large additional force in any part where it might become necessary.

25th.
The King's
message on
invasion

Such menaces had in fact been uttered by the rulers of France, and Mr. Dundas had issued a plan for more completely assuring our safety. In its general outline, it proposed the augmentation of the militia by volunteers, to be added as privates to each company; local bodies of volunteer infantry, especially near the coast, of cavalry, both fencible and local, with details as to the manner of composing, embodying, and regulating

14th.
Mr. Dundas's
plan for volun-
teers.

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26th.
He moves an
address.

Mr. Fox.

them, and he recommended a general subscription. He now moved an address, assuring his Majesty that the House would concur in all necessary measures for guarding against the designs of the enemy, and of their firm and decided support in the present just and necessary war. It was unanimously voted, after a few observations from Mr. Fox, who, while he admitted the extensive preparations of the enemy and the necessity of placing in the hands of the Crown the means of defence, objected to voluntary subscriptions as unconstitutional, and observed that the words "just and necessary" seemed to have been introduced into the address for the sole purpose of preventing unanimity in voting it.

Mr. Pitt.

Mr. Pitt would not, for the sake of unanimity, omit a description of the war, which had invariably been used in that house, and which belonged to it, perhaps, in a greater degree than to any preceding contest. Some observations of Mr. Drake on an expression of Mr. Grey, that he would rather live under the rule of Nero or Caligula, than under the cruel, unjust, and tyrannical government of France, drew from that gentleman a declaration that he would rather live even under the rule of the King of Prussia or the Empress of Russia than the present government of France.

Mr. Drake.

Mr. Grey.

Discussion on
voluntary
contributions.

24th.

But the most material point of discussion arose on the suggestion of voluntary contributions. Very soon after the appearance of Mr. Dundas's circular, Mr. Baker had described it as most irregular, particularly during a sitting of Parliament. In these sentiments, Mr. Serjeant Adair and Mr. Fox fully agreed; and, shortly afterward, Mr. Sheridan obtained a resolution that a copy of the circular should be laid before the House; as he considered the application illegal and unconstitutional, and would submit to the House a motion on the subject. Mr. Martin declared that, coming after the punishments inflicted on individuals for avowing political opinions, the general system of erecting barracks all over the kingdom, the introduction of foreign troops without the consent of Parliament, was a measure which crowned the whole.

With much more point, and a far better style of eloquence, Mr. Western, in a maiden speech, expressed and vindicated his opinion, that the constitution, in its vital principle, was attacked and violated, and the dignity of the House grossly insulted, by the late measures for raising a military force, and the present appeal to individuals for support from their purses.

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Mr. Western.

Mr. Fox, Mr. Francis, and Mr. Serjeant Adair, maintained similar sentiments; Mr. Pitt briefly declared that the measure was perfectly legal, and consonant to frequent practice. It had not been taken without previous intimation; for, when he moved the bill to augment the militia, he had stated that it was proposed to adopt other measures.

Other
members.

According to the intention he had announced, Mr. Sheridan moved for a declaration, that it is dangerous and unconstitutional to solicit money from the people as a private aid, loan, benevolence, or subscription, for public purposes, without the consent of Parliament.

28th.
Mr. Sheridan's
motion.

His speech was one of great learning and ability, correct in arrangement, and forcible in argument and illustration. He undertook to shew that the possession of such a power by the Crown was not reconcilable either to the spirit or the letter of our constitution; inconsistent with ancient usage; and that, even if it might be countenanced by authorities, it was not fit to be resorted to as a source of revenue for the security of the kingdom. He represented the danger of giving to the Crown a power of appealing, not to Parliament, but to knots and selected societies of individuals, and procuring supplies for purposes unknown and unexplained to the legal representatives of the people. In 1784, he said, if the House of Commons had refused the supplies, as the best means of resisting the unconstitutional attack on their privileges, the people, deluded by artful cries of a fourth estate, and of a monstrous coalition, would have granted a sufficient sum to the Crown, and made all the functions and purposes of Parliament unnecessary. It was ridiculous to say

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that subscriptions from the subject to the Crown were voluntary: it was untrue, even in the days of James the First; but much more so now, when the officers of customs and excise, placemen, pensioners, and dependents on the Crown, were greater in number than all the constituent body of the kingdom; certainly more than that part of the people which nominated and returned a majority of that House.

He then considered the statutes, the law precedents, and the speeches and declarations of eminent men, relative to benevolences, from Edward the Fourth to 1782; and, after a series of sarcastic reflections on the objects of the war, frequently expressed by himself and others in and out of Parliament, concluded by observing, that in this, as in every other instance, the minister mimicked the Jacobins; his measure was calculated, not merely for delusion, vexation, and oppression, but, by taking advantage of the decay of all popular spirit, to establish a principle ruinous to liberty.

The Attorney-
general.

With equal minuteness, the Attorney-general reviewed the proceedings of former governments and the declarations of the most eminent lawyers, shewing that what had been done was not repugnant to the principles of the constitution, but sanctioned and confirmed by the spirit, the letter, the text, and the comment of every existing law. He cited particularly what had been done in 1778, the opinion of Lord Camden in 1782, and the judgment of Lord Ashburton, then a cabinet minister. He referred back to transactions in 1759, under Lord Chatham, and in 1746, when Lord Hardwicke, who, in passing sentence on the rebel lords, took occasion to declare that he held the opposite doctrine to be the height of presumption and ignorance. In 1782, when the Lords Camden and Shelburne were in the cabinet, together with a right honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox), inferior to neither in talents and abilities, Lord Shelburne wrote a circular letter to several parts of the country, soliciting subscriptions, and received various answers. From Scotland, not the most agreeable; it said that

the people were poor, having already contributed to the war as much as they were able to bear; but those from Sheffield, Yarmouth, Leeds, Sunderland, Lincoln, Carlisle, Norfolk, Cambridge, Lewes, and Exeter, almost all announced readiness to open a subscription for the support of government; and those who refused alleged inability, not unwillingness. After adverting to other instances, he asked, had not the gentlemen opposite allowed several of the nobility to raise companies at their own expense? Why had the East India Company been permitted, during the American war, to subscribe three ships? or, why had a noble lord (Lonsdale) been suffered to promise a seventy-four? Upon the whole, it was not wise to declare any resolution, and he moved the previous question.

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Mr. Fox explained, that, in 1782, Lord Shelburne's was not a letter soliciting, or even hinting at, contribution or subscription; but had merely for its object to take the advice of the people at large, on the subject of arming to protect the country. In defence of his own consistency, he mentioned that, at the opening of the session, after the donation of ships by the East India Company, and the promise of one by Lord Lonsdale, he had declared that he deemed every gift of the kind an injury to the constitution. He mentioned legal opinions of Mr. St. John and of Sir Francis Bacon; and said that the statement by Lord Hardwicke was extra-judicial, and therefore of the less authority.

Mr. Fox.

In the course of an ingenious and pointed speech, Mr. Windham took an opportunity to disclaim the saying which had been imputed to him and industriously circulated—"Perish commerce; let the constitution live." Whether this sentiment were in itself true or false, it came from Mr. Hardinge; he had never uttered it. Mr. Sheridan made a short reply, and the motion for putting the previous question was negatived*.

Mr. Windham

Motion
negatived.

On the same day, the Earl of Lauderdale moved the same resolution in the House of Lords. The

Motion of
Lord
Lauderdale.

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Lord
Hardwicke.

debate was not distinguished by novelty, either of opinion or expression. The Earl of Hardwicke explained the opinion so decidedly expressed by his ancestor, the Lord Chancellor. Great pains were taken by the Tories and Jacobites of those times to obstruct every measure adopted for the security of the constitution and the suppression of rebellion ; but it did not occur to any man, who was a real friend to his country, and to the government established at the Revolution, that those noblemen and gentlemen who stood forth in support of the common safety were guilty of any illegal or unconstitutional act. The fate of this motion was similar to that of Mr. Sheridan*.

April 1st.
Debate on the
Volunteer bill.

Mr. Francis.

When a bill for the establishment of volunteer corps had been brought in, and Mr. Pitt moved that the House should go into a committee, Mr. Francis complained of a prevailing practice, which, in effect, took away all freedom of debate, by confining every discussion to three or four individuals, who occupied the whole time of the House with speeches of many hours ; and not only wore out the patience of the few who attended them, but precluded all others from offering their opinions.

Mr. Fox having renounced all intention to make a long speech on the present occasion†, vindicated his own consistency, in 1782, and, jointly with Mr. Sheri-

* The numbers on a division were 104 to 7.

† This renunciation of long speeches produced an effusion of some humour. Mr. Burke supposed the opinion Mr. Francis had given was drawn from a precept of Captain Morris, a writer of very high authority with gentlemen opposite to him.

“ Solid men of Boston, take no strong potations ;
Solid men of Boston, make no long orations ;
Solid men of Boston, go to bed by sun-down,
And don't lose your way, like the loggerheads of London.
Bow, wow, wow ! ”

This allusion to a well-known song of the popular lyrist, in which Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas were exposed in a very ludicrous situation, gave Mr. Sheridan an opportunity to make one of those pointed retorts for which he was peculiarly qualified. He supposed that the injunction against long orations was not the only moral precept in the system of ethics alluded to, which regulated the conduct of Mr. Burke. He would remind him of another passage, which says—

“ He went to Daddy Jenky, by trimmer Hal attended,
In such company, good lack !—how his morals must be mended !
Bow, wow, wow ! ”

dan, maintained the propriety of the conduct pursued by the Marquis of Rockingham.

When the bill was presented for a third reading, Mr. Francis prefaced a speech of considerable length, by reading an article of the Bill of Rights by which levying money for, or to the use of, the Crown, by pretence of prerogative, without grant of Parliament, for longer time, or in other manner than the same is or shall be granted, was declared "illegal." As the debate which followed was founded entirely on this well-known truism, and as the same matter had already been so amply discussed, no novelty of argument or illustration could be expected. Some asperities of language occurred; but they do not deserve commemoration.

After the third reading, Mr. Serjeant Adair, as a rider to the bill, moved a clause to give an express authority to receive voluntary subscriptions for the purposes of the act, and to direct the application of them. He was not cordially supported by Mr. Sheridan; while Mr. Fox and Mr. Grey, disapproving the whole measure, assented reluctantly to any proposal which would give it even a qualified effect. The Master of the Rolls and Mr. Pitt resisted the clause as unnecessary, tending to raise a doubt, and embarrass and encumber a measure which was perfectly legal. The clause was negatived.

In the House of Lords the bill was not opposed; but, on the second reading, the Marquis of Lansdowne and the Earl of Abingdon explained their motives and conduct in 1778 and 1782.

Government thought fit to increase the military force by permitting Frenchmen to enlist in the British army: they were to be led by officers of their own nation, and receive British pay. In ordinary circumstances, such a measure could hardly have received countenance; but, when a large portion of the French people viewed the existing government as a mere usurpation, when the protection to which they should have been intitled was withdrawn, when they were plundered, proscribed, and as subjects utterly re-

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April 7th.
Mr. Francis.

Clause moved
by Serjeant
Adair.

April.
Bill passes in
the Lords.

Inrolment of
French
emigrants.

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Bill brought in.
April 11th.
Opposition on
the second
reading by
Mr. Baker.

nounced, the ordinary modes of reasoning were deemed inapplicable to them.

Yet a bill authorizing such a measure could not proceed without rigid examination and severe animadversion. On the motion for a second reading, Mr. Baker approved its principle, because, although it was necessary to increase our force, and better to employ men to fight in their own cause, than suffer them to remain a dead weight on the country, yet if, as it was rumoured, those who did not enlist were to be treated as aliens; if levy money was to be given; and if they were to be introduced into this country, as was alleged, for air and exercise;" the transaction was suspicious; exercise might include hostile operations; and what security had we that there should not be sixty thousand landed, and all under military law?

Mr. Pitt.

These suggestions were properly reprov'd by Mr. Pitt; there was no clause enabling government to treat these men as aliens; it was unnecessary, as that power was already conferred by the Alien Act; nor was there in the bill one word about levy money, although some allowance might be necessary to those who could not otherwise repair to a place of rendezvous.

Mr. Sheridan.

After a few more observations on each side, Mr. Sheridan forcibly stated his objections. In controverting an observation of Mr. Jenkinson, that we should be able to penetrate into the interior of France in the present campaign, an attempt in which none could afford more effectual assistance than Frenchmen, he adverted to the prospects and events of last year, particularly Toulon and La Vendée. He could conceive nothing more cruel than driving unfortunate persons into the field with a certainty of being destroyed if captured. Should these unfortunate men be so treated, were we to revenge their fate by retaliation? [Mr. Burke exclaimed, "Yes."] "Good Heaven!" cried Mr. Sheridan, "consider that the lives of millions may depend upon that single word—that you will introduce "a system of human sacrifice all over Europe." By the words of the bill, it was for the first time acknowledged, from ministerial authority, that France had "subjects;"

and we might be assured that the present government of that country would treat those subjects as rebels whenever they found them fighting in the pay of Great Britain.

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In a constitutional point of view, he held the bill to be most dangerous. Martial law, to which the men were to be subjected, was to be left, without limitation, entirely to the King. He expatiated on the danger of employing a body of men, who, smarting under the lash, and detesting even the name of liberty, might be inclined to do any thing to bring about that despotism which was so dear to them. In this age of liberality and religious tolerance, it was not deemed unsafe to entertain in the kingdom an army of possibly thirty thousand Roman Catholic foreigners; to him their religious opinions were matter of indifference; but what an insult did we offer to the Roman Catholics of England, in continuing oppressive and degrading restrictions, although they eminently distinguished their loyalty, and manifested the most dutiful spirit of allegiance! If this bill should pass, he gave notice that he would, without loss of time, move the abolition of all disabilities on account of religious opinions.

Mr. Burke, who had been accused of a smile or laugh when the former despotism in France was mentioned, assured the House that it was not one of levity, but of bitterness and sorrow. France must pass through many severe trials, must swallow many a bitter pill, before she could be restored to that happy despotism under which he once saw her flourish. In his usual fervid terms, he depicted the horrible tyranny then prevailing, as so frightful, that Milton himself would have been ashamed to present to his readers such a hell as that country, or such a devil as a modern Jacobin. He ridiculed the perpetual use which pretended friends of freedom made of the words "liberty" and "despotism;" depicted the evils which must result, should the system of Jacobinism ever take place in this country; and felt no difficulty in declaring that if French property was not restored, property in England would not be worth ten years' purchase.

Mr. Burke.

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Mr. Francis.
Mr. Grey.

The debate was closed by Mr. Francis, who doubted that the unhappiness of the French, excepting the immediate objects and victims of cruelty, was so great as had been described; and Mr. Grey, who, while he reiterated his admission about living under Nero or Caligula, believed the cause of the present tyranny to be the ancient despotism and the combination of the allied powers.

14th.
Debate on
going into a
committee.

Although the division on this occasion was far from flattering*, the opposition party opposed the motion for going into a committee; and Colonel Tarleton and Mr. Whitbread repeated the arguments used in former debates concerning La Vendée, Lyons, and Toulon, and on Mr. Burke's "Yes," and declared that passing this bill would destroy the privileges of Magna Charta, undermine the Bill of Rights, set at nought some of the important provisions of the Act of Settlement, and annihilate the British Constitution.

As to retaliation, Lord Mulgrave stated that, when he was at Toulon, persons serving in that garrison on an important post were surprised and taken, and said to have been massacred in cold blood. On inquiry, it was found that no such event had happened; but should such conduct be adopted by our enemies, we must retaliate. If a contrary doctrine were announced, the enemy would bully us with the threat from day to day, for the purpose of inspiring terror. The division was again strongly in favour of the measure†.

17th.
Debate on the
motion that
the bill do
pass.
Mr. Fox.

After the third reading, on the motion that the bill should pass, Mr. Fox recapitulated the usual topics on the cause, commencement, and conduct of the war. His assertion that by the alliance against them the French had been driven to the violent scenes of bloodshed and horror so frequently cited, and, from experience, he totally denied Mr. Burke's assertion that before the revolution the people had any security for liberty or property. Treating on the horrors of a war of murder and retaliation, he said, "If the French were "to land in this kingdom, and there chanced to be a "body of the people so abandoned to all sense of duty,

* 21 to 105. † 130 to 28.

“so lost to the love of their country, so dead to their own interest and happiness, as to join them, should we pardon those who produced commissions from the Convention? We should not; nor would the French, in the like case, respect commissions granted by our King. If we determined not to retaliate, in what a calamitous situation did we place those whom we employed! And if we did retaliate, good God! in what horrors would Europe be involved!”

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Mr. Burke, in one of his most fervid and most eloquent speeches, noticed an eulogy on humanity introduced by Mr. Fox in the course of his argument. He undoubtedly possessed that virtue in an eminent degree; but his formal and uncalled-for panegyric wore the appearance of what the ancients called *ambitiosa ornamenta*. There never was a subject on which he could exercise his uncommon eloquence to so little purpose, especially in that house; but if he would preach his sermon in the Jacobin club, or at the Cordeliers, it would be remarkably opportune and extremely necessary. He described the *lex talionis* as the law of nations, derived from the law of nature. “God forbid,” he said, “that the authors of murder should not find it recoil on their own heads. Justice is the ground-work, humanity the superstructure, which cannot subsist without it. But fears are expressed that we may inflame the Jacobins by severity. Inflame a Jacobin! You may as well talk of setting fire to hell. Impossible! The measure of their rage and iniquity overflows, and cannot be increased. Friend and foe, royalist and republican, all fall beneath the savage havoc of that club and its worthy coadjutor, the Cordeliers; nor are the members of either secure from the other, or even from itself. Jacobin slaughters Cordelier, Cordelier butchers Jacobin, and at times each inverts the murderous knife into its own bosom. Whatever is said of the tyranny of princes, an attentive observer of history will discover that their practice is more lenient than the mildest doctrine of theorists. In the American war, only four instances of wanton and unnecessary murder

Mr. Burke.

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“ occurred. In 1688, the Irish Brigade entered into the
 “ service of France, and retained their own uniform.
 “ In 1746, a whole regiment of them was taken; but
 “ they were not taken as rebels; no severity was prac-
 “ tised. Many French regiments, after the cruel and
 “ impolitic revocation of the edict of Nantes, were taken
 “ into the pay of Prussia, Holland, and Great Britain;
 “ yet France never sacrificed them when they became
 “ prisoners. The battle of Fontenoy was gained prin-
 “ cipally through the exertions of the Irish Brigade;
 “ but although they fought against us in an open and
 “ direct rebellion, these extremities were not thought
 “ of. Lord Ligonier, an officer of great note in our
 “ service, a Frenchman by birth, when taken prisoner
 “ fighting against France, was exchanged in the usual
 “ manner, for an officer of equal rank. The late insur-
 “ rection in the Netherlands was quelled by main force,
 “ and what was the consequence? a general amnesty,
 “ and the voluntary establishment of those articles for
 “ which the people contended. The murder of the
 “ King of Sweden was avenged by no such punish-
 “ ment as those inflicted by the Revolutionary Tribu-
 “ nal; and if every instance of oppression, injustice,
 “ and cruelty throughout Europe for the space of a
 “ hundred years were collected, the sum total would
 “ fall infinitely short of the same instances of tyranny
 “ which had occurred in any one week since the revo-
 “ lution of France. Lanjuinais, whose stout republi-
 “ canism could not save his head from the democratic
 “ guillotine, a member of the Convention, and a muni-
 “ cipal officer of the city of Paris, had stated,—1. That
 “ since the revolution not one murder or pillage had
 “ been committed which was not previously planned
 “ and agreed to by the reigning powers of Paris. 2.
 “ That the dreadful carnage of September 1792 was
 “ arranged by the five leading men of the day, who
 “ settled lists of proscribed people, and paid the assas-
 “ sins one hundred sous (4s. 2d.) a head for those they
 “ dispatched. He deprecated all attempts to diminish
 “ the horror and indignation common to every well-
 “ disposed mind in contemplating such events. What

“ we excuse we are soon led to justify ; what we justify, to admire ; what we admire, to imitate. The apology that these savage excesses arose from the combination against the French, existed only in English writings and speeches. Their crimes and outrages spring directly from their principles ; before a war with any country, they had degenerated into savages, and had excited universal detestation by their principles and spontaneous acts of ferocity. I rejoice,” he said, “ in the plan of arming France against France, and most heartily approve of the principles on which it is maintained. The war must no longer be confined to the vain attempt of raising a barrier to lawless and savage power ; but must be directed to its own rational end, the entire destruction of the desperate horde which gave it birth.”

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1794.

Mr. Sheridan, while he acknowledged the undiminished talent and oratorical power of Mr. Burke, contended that his historical facts were incorrect and inapplicable, and argued, in his accustomed manner, that the seizure of property and waste of life, imputed to the French, must have been derived from the principles and example of their old government ; and he added, that if the present bill passed, the House would abandon two great principles on which their authority depended ; the annual opportunity of disbanding the army, and the guardianship of the public purse. The bill passed without a division, nor did it occasion any debate in the House of Lords.

Mr. Sheridan.

Faithful to his promise, Mr. Sheridan moved for leave to bring in a bill to abolish certain religious qualifications, required by law, from persons bearing military office ; strongly asserting the loyalty and good disposition of the Roman Catholics at the present day.

May 26th.
Mr. Sheridan's
motion on
religious
qualifications.

Mr. Dundas acknowledged the loyalty of the Roman Catholics, and their attachment to the constitution ; but, as the motion included dissenters of every description, and the repeal of all religious tests—a subject which had been more than once discussed in the House, he moved the previous question. Mr.

Mr. Dundas.

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1794.

lost.
Debate on the
Sardinian
treaty.

Jan. 31st.

Fox and Mr. William Smith supported the original motion to its full extent; but the previous question was rejected, without a division.

Several debates arose on the events of the war, the incidents arising out of them, and the treaties by which it was proposed to aid the belligerents. When the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed that the treaty with the King of Sardinia should be referred to a committee of supply, Mr. Fox observed that it obliged us to give every thing, while we received nothing; to maintain a perpetual war for the benefit of the contracting party, without any equivalent stipulation in our favour. We engaged not only to pay him an annual subsidy of two hundred thousand pounds, but to restore all those territories which the French had wrested from him, while we were sitting quiet and boasting of our neutrality. He added, that the other treaties, particularly that with his Sicilian Majesty, were not to be considered as having his approbation because he did not then state his objections to them.

Little worthy of notice occurred in the discussion; but it becomes memorable, as it occasioned the first parliamentary appearance of Mr. Canning.

First appear-
ance of
Mr. Canning.

He was in his twenty-fourth year, and, while at Eton, had entitled himself to the highest consideration, not only by his proficiency in academical studies, but for displays in literature, brilliant with wit, remarkable for felicity of diction, and highly honourable to the character of that venerable seminary. At Oxford, he not only sustained, but increased his previous renown; and expectation, not, in this instance, doomed to be disappointed, fixed on him as a distinguished luminary in the parliamentary hemisphere.

For some reasons, it had been supposed that he would appear in the ranks of opposition; but he was on the other side, and in a speech, which was generally admired, answered Mr. Grey and supported the motion of the minister. In his demeanour, he did not assume a lofty importance or give way to an exaggerated zeal. When he presumed to express a difference of opinion from Mr. Fox, he begged to be

understood as admitting what he really felt, the sincerest admiration for his talent and person.

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1794.

In reviewing the state of France and the circumstances of the war, he used an argument, which, for its sense and its manner of illustration, was highly celebrated: "When neither our reason, nor our prudence," he said, "can be set against the war, an attempt is made to alarm our apprehensions. The French are stated to be an invincible people; inflamed to a degree of madness with the holy enthusiasm of freedom, there is nothing that they will not undertake, there is nothing that they cannot accomplish." That the French were enthusiastically animated to a state of absolute insanity, he desired no better proof than to see them hugging themselves in a system of gross and grinding slavery, while they called aloud upon all Europe to admire and envy their freedom. But their madness could not be admitted as a reason against our being at war with them. Of madness there were several species. If theirs had been a harmless idiot lunacy, content with playing tricks, and practising fooleries at home, with dressing up strumpets in oak leaves, and inventing nick-names for the calendar, he should have been far from desiring to interrupt innoxious amusements; "We might have looked on with a hearty contempt, not wholly unmixed with commiseration. But if theirs were a moody, mischievous insanity; if, not contented with tearing and wounding themselves, they proceeded to exert their unnatural strength for the annoyance of their neighbours; if, not satisfied with weaving straws and wearing fetters at home, they attempted to carry their systems and their slavery abroad, and to impose them on the nations around; it would become necessary that those nations should be roused to resistance; such a disposition must, for the safety and peace of the world, be expelled, and, if possible, eradicated."

A message from the King announced a treaty with Prussia and convention with Holland, and recommended that the House would take means for enabling

April 28th.
Treaties with
Prussia and
Holland.

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him to fulfil his engagements. By this compact the King of Prussia was bound to furnish an army of sixty-two thousand men, to be employed wherever it should be judged most suitable to the interests of the maritime powers. His majesty and their high mightinesses agreed to pay him £50,000 sterling every month until the end of the year; three hundred thousand pounds immediately, to defray the charge of completing this army and putting it in a state of action; and, at the end of their service, one hundred thousand pounds more were to be paid for the expense of reconveying them into the territory of their own sovereign; and in the mean time one pound twelve shillings per month for each man was to be allowed for bread and forage. All conquests by this army were to be made in the name of the maritime powers, to be at their disposal during the war, and at the conclusion of peace. The convention with the Dutch related only to the apportionment of the payment to be made, of which they were to furnish four hundred thousand pounds, at specified periods.

30th.
Mr. Pitt's
motion.

In a committee, Mr. Pitt explained and recommended this arrangement. The whole expense for a year would be £1,800,000, of which England would pay £1,400,000. The proposed force would be absolutely necessary, and we could not have obtained it from any other quarter. The levy money and equipment would amount to about thirteen pounds per man; to bring into the field the same number of British or Hanoverian, or other foreign troops, would have cost a much larger sum; their pay would amount to less than that of British subjects, and, on the whole, the cost of these troops would be considerably smaller than an equal number derived from any other quarter. He fixed the vote of credit to be required at £2,500,000, which, after paying £1,350,000, the extraordinary expense incurred by this treaty, would leave £1,150,000, applicable to other extraordinary expenses of the year.

Mr. Fox.

Mr. Fox, applying both censure and ridicule to the conduct and condition of the King of Prussia, moved as an amendment that one million should be deducted

from the proposed vote; but, after a few observations from Mr. Windham, the original motions passed*.

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In the upper House, Lord Grenville moved the address, which was ably opposed by the Marquis of Lansdowne; he treated on the instability of such alliances, the difference between soldiers who felt the generous pride of principals and those who were engaged merely as auxiliaries, and pointed out the probability that the forces of the King of Prussia would be required to secure and protect his own acquisitions in Poland. Other peers spoke; but no amendment was moved, and the address was carried†.

1794.

30th.
House of
Lords.

Dunkirk and Toulon afforded Major Maitland an opportunity of descanting largely on the cause, the progress, the general events, and the ultimate tendency of the war; he was particularly severe on the possession and evacuation of Toulon; the attempt to destroy the navy and stores was as pitiful as it was ineffectual. The covering army, which we ought to have employed, was remaining idle at home, under Sir Charles Grey and the Earl of Moira. His speech extended to every transaction of the late campaign; but he moved only that the House should form itself into a committee to inquire into the causes which led to the failures at Dunkirk and Toulon.

April 10.
Major Mait-
land's motion
on Dunkirk
and Toulon.

Success could not be expected to attend this motion; it was probably produced only as the means of expressing some strong censures, and in the hope of drawing forth declarations from the friends of government which might be cited in future debates.

Mr. Jenkinson vindicated the conduct of the war and the transactions most particularly selected for animadversion. In his opinion, the best mode of carrying on the campaign was, to make ourselves masters of several posts in the Low Countries, so as to secure the marching forward of the combined powers into the interior of France. He had no difficulty in saying, that a march to Paris was practicable; and he, for one, would recommend such an expedition.

Mr. Jenkinson.

This remark enabled Mr. Fox to say, "We are now

Mr. Fox.

* 134 to 33.

† 99 to 6.

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1794.

"told that the object of the war is Paris, and that we must win our way town by town. I do not mean to question the choice of the means, if such was the end; but a more melancholy prospect could not well be presented; and gentlemen who now believe that Paris must be taken before we can look for peace, will go home with less sanguine hopes than they have hitherto entertained*."

Lord Mulgrave.

Mr. Fox.

In the course of the debate, Lord Mulgrave made a clear statement of the circumstances which rendered necessary the evacuation of Toulon, and the manner in which it had been effected; Sir James Murray explained the transaction before Dunkirk; and Mr. Fox, in justice, observed that it was highly honourable to the Duke of York, that, in all the debates on the conduct of the war, no shadow of blame had fallen upon him; and that, after raising the siege of Dunkirk, West Flanders had been recovered under his immediate orders. He admired the conduct and valour displayed at Lincelles, not less than they who extolled them the most; not the more, but certainly not the less, because he had the honour of numbering the gallant officer who commanded among his friends.

Mr. Canning.

Several other members spoke: Mr. Canning made some sarcastic observations on the views and conduct of opposition, and the state to which, had they been in power, their politics would have reduced the country; nor did he spare the patriotism of those constitutional subscribers for Poland, who would not subscribe for the safety of their own country.

Mr. Pitt.

Mr. Pitt said he had always considered that the acquisition of Dunkirk was desirable, if it could have been obtained without too great a sacrifice of time, or the employment of so great a portion of force as to interfere with other objects of the campaign. It had been repeatedly stated, that this enterprise was exclusively the measure of the English cabinet. An inquiry

* The expression of Mr. Jenkinson was often afterward adverted to in Parliament, and formed a theme with those "rash wits" out of the House, who imagine that ridicule is the only test of truth, and their own obstreperous horse-laugh the only effective application of ridicule.

tending to discriminate between different ministers and military commanders, as to the advice they might have given, was not in itself proper ; but he would say that the expedition was undertaken with the complete concurrence of the royal person who had the command, and the other officers, both as to the time and the mode of carrying it into execution.

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1794.

The division was against the motion*.

Another transaction connected with the war, although it arose before Great Britain was a party to it, formed the subject of a debate. In moving for peace with France, Mr. Whitbread had introduced the name of Lafayette, calling the conduct of the King of Prussia toward him a cold-blooded act of the most malevolent and fruitless cruelty ever perpetrated in the whole history of tyranny. Mr. Fox, too, described the imprisonment of this virtuous and meritorious individual as a disgrace on civilised society.

March 6.
Motion on La-
fayette.

Shortly afterward, General Fitzpatrick moved an address, representing that the detention of General Lafayette, Messrs. Alexander Lameth, La Tour Maubourg, and Bureau de Pusy, in the prisons of the King of Prussia, was highly injurious to the cause of his Majesty and his allies ; and humbly beseeching him to intercede with the court of Berlin for their deliverance. In advancing this proposal, it was stated that motives of general humanity would furnish grounds for interference ; but the personal character of Lafayette, for little was said of the other three, was most relied on. All the charges against him, from the capture of the Bastille to the time of his flight, were denied ; he had neither instigated nor participated in any cruelties or excesses, but, on the contrary, risked his life to restrain them ; he had constantly been the zealous friend of his sovereign and his family ; he had prevented the leaders of the Constituent Assembly from prosecuting, deposing, or executing the King ; and in the Champ de Mars he had, by force, dispersed the insurgents. If he had used the dangerous expression of the “ sacred duty of

17th.
General Fitz-
patrick.

CHAP.
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1794.

insurrection," his actions were the best interpreters of his meaning, and they had shown that it was tyranny of every description which he considered it a duty to resist. Whether all his measures were well-timed or not, it was sufficient if his intentions were pure. When he arrested the commissioners of the assembly, they offered him the first dignities of the republic; and for answer he consigned them to the civil power, as violators of the law; and, after a virtuous, though ineffectual, effort to support the constitution to which he had pledged himself, he withdrew from his command, and passed the frontiers, in the firm resolution, however, of not joining the enemies of his country. With a company of officers, which, including their attendants, consisted in all of forty-two persons, he passed into a neutral country, and upon neutral ground, having entered an Austrian post upon a promise of a free passage from the commander, was he made prisoner. From this post he was conducted to Namur, where he was offered his liberty on condition of joining the army of the French princes. Without hesitation, he refused, and the King of Prussia, commanding in the district, demanded him and his companions as his prisoners. The treatment of these unfortunate persons had been to the last degree cruel; they had been confined in subterraneous and unwholesome dungeons, which had nearly proved fatal to their lives; they had been debarred from all communication with each other, and the utmost favour which, after long solicitation, had been obtained, was, the permission for each separately to breathe the fresh air, for one hour in the day, under a number of harsh restrictions.

Colonel
Tarleton.

Colonel Tarleton, seconding the motion, spoke of the early virtues of Lafayette; described his conduct during the conflict between the Jacobin club and the friends of the constitution, in terms which would imply, in the honorable colonel, a total forgetfulness of the real history of the period. He spoke much of his personal and domestic virtues, and his admiration of this country. He had neither countenanced nor participated in the crimes of Danton or Robespierre, but had

supported his king, and had fallen a victim to the cause of royalty.

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Mr. Fox observed that, as the pretext alleged for continuing the severe treatment of Lafayette and his companions was, that they were the prisoners of the allied powers; not to interfere on their behalf was to suffer this country to be implicated in the odium, and handed down to posterity as the accomplices, of the diabolical cruelty of the Prussian cabinet. The customs of civilized nations presented no obstacle to our interposition. In the case of Sir Charles Asgill, private applications were made from this country to a court with which we were at war. The intervention of the Queen of France was solicited, and proved effectual. America, the ally of France, yielded to her intercession in behalf of humanity; and what should prevent his Majesty from using his good offices with an ally in the same cause?

1794.
Mr. Fox.

The argument of Mr. Fox received little support from a mixture of the extravagant and ludicrous with which Mr. Courtenay treated the matter; or from the speeches of Mr. Grey, Mr. W. Smith, and Mr. Whitbread.

Other
speakers.

Declining to discuss the character of Lafayette, Mr. Pitt said, he would never admit that the four persons in question ever were the friends of true liberty, or deserved well of their country; nor did he understand that their detention by the King of Prussia was in any degree a departure from the rights of war or the law of nations. Was any case made out whereby this country was so implicated as to be bound to interfere? He could not admit that the cause espoused by Lafayette, or the principles that he and his friends had acted upon, deserved well of Europe. If any extraordinary severity had been exercised toward them, it was to be lamented; but what were the circumstances? A person, commanding a hostile army, without any direct or indirect proposition on his part, had thought fit to withdraw himself from it, and was found within the posts of the enemy against whom the army he commanded was acting. Could his capture be deemed

Mr. Pitt.

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1794.

Mr. Burke.

a violation of the law of nations ? or could this country consistently interfere with a sovereign and independent power, in a matter in which we had neither participation nor responsibility ?

Mr. Burke adverted to the many horrors which had attended the various revolutions in France, in which we had not interfered, and considered Lafayette as the origin and author of all these calamities. He thought that " illustrious exile," as he was called, though, in fact, the outcast of the world, deserved the fate he had incurred. Only one example of any such interference had been adduced ; the interposition of the late court of France, now so frequently denominated despotic and tyrannical, in favour of Sir Charles Asgill ; an interposition which was chiefly rendered effectual by the exertions of the late unfortunate queen, who, for the benevolence and benignity which she displayed in the exercise of her power, and the firmness, intrepidity, and resolution with which she met her fate, would form an everlasting contrast to the tyranny, cruelty, and baseness of those by whom she was murdered. Every nation had a right to claim her own citizens ; but if she did not, no foreign state ought officiously to make any such demand. Did France claim him ? Yes, as a traitor, whom the rabble, that he had been the instrument in elevating to power, were desirous of sacrificing. In investigating his character, from his outset in America, Mr. Burke stripped him of all the gaudy decorations which his friends had placed upon him. Louis the Sixteenth had let Lafayette fly to America, and he returned and imprisoned the master who had given him his liberty. Far from supporting royalty, he was the first who led an army of sans-culottes against his King. Not a man in France would join in the application for releasing him ; he would not have been received, even had he been sent to Toulon. He had been the author of numerous horrors, and among them all, there was no circumstance of barbarity—excepting the murder of the King and Queen—more atrocious than the massacre of Foulon and Berthier. The Abbé Foulon, son of that victim, in his

anguish, often declared it was Lafayette who caused his father's murder! "I would not," Mr. Burke concluded, "debase my humanity by supporting an application in behalf of such a horrid ruffian."

An attempt was made by Mr. Fox to exculpate Lafayette from the murder of Berthier and Foulon, and answered by Mr. Jenkinson and Mr. Burke; and the motion, opposed also by the Solicitor-general, Mr. Somers Cocks, and Mr. Hiley Addington, was negatived on a division*.

Of all the persons who had suffered in the course of the revolution, it would be difficult to name one less intitled to the intervention of England in his behalf than Lafayette. It was not mentioned in the debate; but was it possible to forget the case of Major André? Without entering into the question whether the law of nations was or was not justly exercised in the case of that most unfortunate officer, it is quite certain that a word from Lafayette, if it had not saved his life, would have averted from his execution those circumstances of ignominy which embittered his fate, and harrowed the feelings of his friends. Could the nobleman, the Frenchman, the soldier, who had sanctioned such an act toward an English gentleman, expect that the hand of England should be extended to draw him from a foreign dungeon? Even General Washington, although he felt for him an affectionate regard, did not venture to make or to incite any public solicitation in his behalf, but bounded his efforts to private appeal, and unofficial application through the ministers of his country at different courts; America being a neutral power highly respected by them all†.

Observations.

In their eagerness to censure the proceedings of government, the opposition, in one instance, proceeded on an authority far too slight to engage the attention of the high and dignified assemblies to which their observations were addressed. On the same day, in both Houses, debates unexpectedly arose, occasioned, as it appeared, by the contents of a New York newspaper,

May 26th.
Motions on a
supposed communication of
Lord Dorchester.

* 153 to 46.

† Marshall's Life of Washington, vol. v. p. 567.

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lately arrived, which gave at full length what purported to be an answer from Lord Dorchester, governor of Canada, to the delegates of several Indian tribes*, who complained of encroachments made on the boundary line by the people of the United States; in which his lordship said that a war between them and Great Britain was not unlikely within the present year.

Marquis of
Lansdowne.

The Marquis of Lansdowne, in a general attack on the conduct of administration, adverted to America, citing the order in council of June, 1793, and consequent seizures; the late arrangement between Portugal and Algiers, injurious to American interests; and, lastly, he read the answer of Lord Dorchester to the Indians, which he reprobated as a direct attempt to spirit up those savages to hostilities. He concluded with saying that, as the paper nearly concerned the honour of this country, he wished to have the matter cleared up, and moved for copies of all instructions given to Lord Dorchester respecting the difference between the two countries.

Lord Gren-
ville.

Lord Grenville, having first justified the order in council and consequent proceedings, and explained the conduct of government with respect to Portugal and Algiers, declared that of the paper which had been read he knew nothing; if authentic, it might be proceeded on when regularly transmitted by Lord Dorchester; till then the House could not, with propriety, commit its high and grave character on the authority of a New York newspaper: the House divided on the Marquis's motion†.

Similar motion
by Mr. Sheri-
dan.

The language of ministry in the lower House was more explicit; and Mr. Sheridan withdrew his motion, which was similar to the Marquis of Lansdowne's, when the Secretary of State declared that he never heard of the speech attributed to Lord Dorchester before, that no instructions had been sent out which had the remotest tendency to produce a rupture with the American states; on the contrary, ministers had

* Dated Quebec, February 10, 1794. † Contents, 9; Non-contents, 69.

used their utmost endeavours to terminate hostilities between them and the Indians*.

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LXXXV.

Finance presented little room for observation. The deficiencies of the year were to be provided for by a loan of eleven millions; it was readily subscribed, and the additional taxes were agreed to without resistance; but in a debate on the augmentation of the forces, Mr. Buxton suggested that the revenue would be greatly augmented, and it would be a tax on the rich only, if the privilege of franking were abolished; in the same debate, Mr. M. A. Taylor promised that, if the war continued, he should move to take into consideration the abolition of sinecures, and the reduction of the salaries and emoluments of those places from which gentlemen drew great incomes without adequate exertions; a measure which would at once increase the revenue, and diminish what was justly called secret influence; but which, in bolder language, he must denominate corruption.

1794.
Feb. 5.
Finance.

March 25.

On the first of these propositions, nothing ensued; but the other occasioned a debate. It was brought forward by Mr. Harrison, who moved to bring in a bill for the purposes intimated. He proposed to leave untouched all pensions and sinecure places under two hundred pounds a year; but from those exceeding that sum one half was to be taken. The annual income of all efficient places exceeding five hundred pounds, was to be reduced one fourth, and all pensions and sinecure places in the hands of persons holding other efficient offices were to be wholly applied to the public service; but an exception was to be made in favour of the judges, the speakers of both Houses of Parliament, ambassadors, decayed officers of the army and navy and their widows, and the act was to be in force only during the continuance of the war.

April 8.
Motion on
sinecure and
other places.

It were a waste of time to recapitulate the speeches on this proposition. Mr. Burke resisted it as a dan-

* From some unaccountable omission, not a trace of these debates appears in the Parliamentary History. I have given them from, and nearly in, the words of the Annual Register, vol. xxxvi. p. 230. The newspapers contained the usual notice, and therefore the omission in the Parliamentary History is the more extraordinary. See the Times, &c. 27 May, 1794.

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1794.

gerous and direct invasion of the rights and property of individuals ; for the emoluments of a place held under the Crown was a possession as sacred as that of land, and it proposed an injustice not less than that of taking from the proprietor of ten or twenty thousand a year a portion of his wealth, denominating it a sinecure, because he had done nothing for it. Mr. Fox agreed in this statement, and Mr. Pitt declared that, after the argument of that gentleman, he could advance nothing new against the proposition.

Mr. Rose.

Called upon by some remarks of Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Rose described the places abolished, in consequence of Mr. Burke's bill, and the suppressions and reductions which had since taken place by treasury regulations and other means, and places the tenure of which would terminate with their present holders. He shewed the improved management of contracts for loans and lotteries, by which a saving had been effected to the amount of £1,100,000 a year. Formerly large balances were allowed to remain in the hands of certain officers of government, which, in twenty years preceding 1783, had accumulated to the amount of one hundred and seventy-one millions, of which about thirty-six millions had been accounted for. These statements were sustained by ample details.

A division gave the result probably expected on all hands, the rejection of the motion*.

February 7.
Slave trade.

Mr. Wilberforce brought in a bill to prohibit the supply of slaves to foreign territories. After several debates, in Houses not fully attended, it passed the Commons, but was rejected in the Lords by a large majority†, principally on the ground, that while a committee appointed by a former resolution was sitting to inquire into the subject, the House of Commons anticipated the effect of their deliberations by calling on them to do that which, at best, their judgment was not ripe to perform.

Debates on
seditious prac-
tices.

Such were the general and occasional proceedings of the session ; but, through its whole course, one pre-

* 117 to 48.

† 45 to 4.

vailing topic claimed particular and frequent attention—the progress of sedition; the proceedings to which it had given rise, and the means of checking the career of its promoters.

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1794.

Very early in the session, Lord Stanhope adverted to Mr. Muir's conviction and sentence. The House, he said, had the right of examining into the practice of courts and the conduct of judges. If precedents were necessary where Magna Charta was abused, he would cite those of Alderman Cornish, Algernon Sydney, and Lord Russell, whose attainders for treason and sedition had been reversed by Parliament in the reign of William and Mary. The proceeding against Mr. Muir was most unjustifiable: charges not specified in the indictment were brought against him; he was obliged, by the practice of the court, to deliver a list of his witnesses; then, after seeing all his means of justification, the Lord Advocate was allowed to bring new charges, and thus he was entrapped in a manner most outrageous to common justice. Mr. Palmer, a gentleman of exalted character, alleged a misnomer; but the objection was overruled. They tried him by a false name, but passed sentence on him by his real appellation; and challenges of jurors, on grounds which ought to have been irresistible, were overruled. If all this was the law of Scotland, Scotland had no more liberty than it had under the Stuarts. He moved an address, praying that Mr. Muir might not be transported until the House should have had sufficient time to investigate his case; and he was prepared with similar motions in behalf of Mr. Palmer, Mr. Skirving, and Mr. Margarot.

January 21.

The Earl of Mansfield described the speech of Earl Stanhope as a most heterogeneous mixture, distinguished by flights of fancy that soared beyond the comprehension of reason. The Duke of Norfolk said, that, had some portion of its matter been brought before the House as a petition, he should have thought it their duty to enter into the inquiry. The Earl of Lauderdale, while he disapproved of the proceeding and sentence, declared that the motion could not be

Lord Mansfield.

Duke of Norfolk.

Lord Lauderdale.

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1794.
Lord Chancellor.

entertained, and hoped it would be withdrawn, that it might be produced more regularly.

The Lord Chancellor and Lord Thurlow clearly stated the law of Scotland; explained its difference from that of England; and deprecated the interference of the House, when the parties themselves had presented no petition. In conclusion, Earl Stanhope, who had been solitary in the debate, was solitary in the division, and solitary, also, in a protest containing the substance of his speech, which he placed on the Journals.

February 4.
Mr. Adam's
motion.

Mr. Adam applied for leave to bring in a bill, giving an appeal to the House of Lords in matter of law, from judgments and sentences of the courts in Scotland. His motion could not properly be said to arise out of the late trials, for he had announced his intention before the close of the last session. He entreated indulgence, because, although he had been in Parliament nineteen years, and exerted himself on many occasions, he had never before originated a measure. He described the advantages of an appellate jurisdiction, and proposed that the indictment, the verdict, and the sentence, should be removed by writ. In civil cases, an appeal from the lords of session to the House of Peers was held to be the natural consequence of abolishing the Scotch Parliament; and if it had been foreseen that there could be no appeal in criminal cases, he was sure that express provision would have been made for it in the Act of Union.

Motion opposed,

Mr. Serjeant Adair and Mr. Fox supported the motion: it was opposed by Mr. Anstruther, the Solicitor-general, Mr. Serjeant Watson, and the Master of the Rolls. The courts of Scotland, they observed, were framed with a view to the laws which they had to administer, and therefore there would be great danger in attempting to alter their jurisdiction. The division was against the motion*.

and lost.

24th.

Admonished, perhaps, by what had passed in the

Lords, Mr. Palmer addressed a petition to the House of Commons, stating the sentence on him to be illegal, unjust, oppressive, and unconstitutional, and praying relief. In presenting this paper, Mr. Sheridan barely announced that the unfortunate gentleman, the Rev. Thomas Fyshe Palmer, now a convict on board a transport, was, some time since, a fellow of Queen's College, Cambridge.

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Mr. Palmer's
petition.
Mr. Sheridan.

On the first impression, Mr. Pitt pronounced the attempt equally unprecedented and improper. It was directed against the sentence of a court of justice, solemnly and deliberately pronounced; it was one which he should hold it his duty, in that stage, to oppose.

Mr. Pitt.

Mr. Fox remonstrated against the rejection of such a petition, in a case where no appeal lay, and, consequently, no alternative remained but an application to the legislature. Whatever opinion might prevail with respect to the particular merits of the case, he trusted that the minister would not wound the constitution by refusing a hearing.

Mr. Fox.

Mr. Pitt immediately gave way to this appeal; but, as, on a point of such great importance, no previous notice had been given, and as he wished to examine precedents, and not hazard a rash opinion, he proposed that the debate should be adjourned for a week. An earlier day was fixed; but, on a suggestion that the execution of the sentence should be deferred, Mr. Dundas said that government did not intend the smallest delay. The warrant had some time ago passed the council board, and the convicts were already received on board transport ships.

Petition received.

On this declaration, Mr. Whitbread founded a motion for an address, requesting his Majesty to delay the departure of Mr. Palmer until after the day fixed for discussing the petition.

Mr. Dundas.

Mr. Whitbread's motion.

Several members observed that there was nothing before the House to serve as a foundation for such an address. There was no distinguishing feature between this case and that of any other convict; and the application should have been to the Crown, whose undoubted prerogative it was to exercise mercy. The

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motion was produced just at the time when the sentence was being executed. The petition had been signed three weeks ; why was it not presented sooner ?

It was said, in explanation, that in Mr. Palmer's case no opportunity had been omitted. Some time ago, a petition had been presented to his Majesty, and notice given to the Secretary of State of the opinions entertained against the legality of the sentence, and of the intention to mention it in Parliament. It had been reported, and there was good reason for believing, that a sentence so abhorrent to the very spirit of our law would not be carried into execution. Thus was the present application delayed until every hope of lenity was extinct. Many observations were made highly favourable to Mr. Palmer. He was said to be descended from one of the most ancient families in the county of Bedford, and he was an unfit object of prosecution and punishment, having been all his life considered a man somewhat deranged in his intellects ; he had no evil intention ; and any twelve gentlemen of Bedfordshire, summoned on a jury, would pronounce him insane.

27th.

On a division, the motion for an address was rejected*. The petition was received.

March 10.
Mr. Adam's
motion.

Mr. Adam brought before the House the entire question of the criminal law of Scotland, as applicable to the cases of Mr. Muir and Mr. Palmer, and of sedition in general, in a long, well-considered, and luminous speech. In treating on the technical parts of the late trials, he availed himself happily of a recent expression of Lord Thurlow, " that the forms of law are the fences " of justice," and descanted on the frame of the indictment ; the improper admission of some and rejection of other evidence ; the observations of the judges ; the verdict and the judgment, applying particular objections to each, and making ample remarks on the state of the law and the hardship of the sentence. He contended that banishment in the Scotch law was not synonymous with transportation, as in these times practised and

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explained, with the consequences annexed of servitude, military government, and the penalty of death in case of a return within the prescribed time*. He moved that a copy of such parts of the books of ad-journal or criminal records of the court of justiciary, as contain the libel or indictment, the verdict, and judgment, in the case of Thomas Muir, Esq. should be laid before the House. This appeared to be the first of five motions, which, in the course of his speech, he said he should submit to consideration.

The Lord Advocate.

The Lord Advocate ably and intelligently vindicated his own proceedings, and explained the law in a manner totally different from that in which it was viewed by Mr. Adam. The remainder of the debate was sustained by Mr. Whitbread, Mr. Fox, Mr. Pitt, and Mr. Grey, and the decision was adverse to the motion†. Mr. Adam afterward made a similar attempt with respect to Mr. Palmer, and proposed an address to the King, in which were embodied many of the arguments used in his speech; but these motions were negatived without a division.

Other efforts.

In the upper House, the Earl of Lauderdale moved for the production of papers respecting the trials. His speech evinced a minute and extensive acquaintance with the history and practice of the law of Scotland; the Earl of Mansfield and the Lord Chancellor, with similar attention to the same sources of knowledge, replied to his arguments; the motions were negatived; and one made by the Lord Chancellor, that there is no ground for interfering in the practice of the established courts of criminal justice, agreed to without any division.

April 15th.
Lord Lauderdale's motion.

Mr. Adam had, in the mean time, renewed his efforts, by a third motion for referring to a committee the law of Scotland relating to the crime of leasing-making; that of sedition; the right of appeal, and

March 25th.
Mr. Adam's third motion.

* It has not been attempted to abstract or give an outline of this able argument; the matter is strictly technical: the statutes, axioms, and cases, utterly incapable of being abridged without injuring the text and destroying the effect of the whole. It was published in a pamphlet, and reprinted in the Parliamentary History, where it occupies sixty-two closely printed columns.

† 171 to 32.

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other subjects which had been noticed in the late discussions. The debate was animated to a greater degree than the subject seemed to promise; but it disclosed little beyond an exact description of criminal proceedings in Scotland, comparative views of the difference between the law and jurisprudence of that country and England; assertions on the one hand that they ought to be assimilated, and, on the other, that both the habits and feelings of the people attached them to the forms of their ancient establishments, guaranteed to them by the Act of Union. Were the learned mover, it was said, to propose such an alteration in Scotland, he would be convinced of that attachment, by the necessity he would find of making his escape out of the kingdom. The motion was lost*.

Proceedings of
the societies.

While the attention of Parliament was thus engaged on the practices of the seditious, and the law respecting them, the societies in England increased in activity and audacity. The Corresponding Society and the Constitutional united their efforts, and omitted no means of exciting a rebellious spirit. They inveighed against the suppression of the Convention; stigmatised the proceedings in the courts of Scotland, compared the judges to Jefferies, and destined them to a similar fate. They proposed to call a National Convention in England, to have a committee to watch proceedings in Parliament, and, in general, to supersede all authority, legislative or judicial, except that which they should establish. The ordinary places of political discussion, called debating societies, where they monopolized all right of speaking, and subdued those who appeared inclined to oppose them, by scurrility and clamour, were found insufficient for their purposes; meetings were held in the gardens of taverns and in the fields neighbouring to London, where every public measure was the subject of reviling and abuse, and every public man, who was not devoted to their cause, in which was included that of the French republic, was held up to execration and devoted to de-

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struction. Every exaggerated phrase used by party in the Houses of Parliament, was consecrated as a text, while sentiments and modes of speech, real or feigned, were made tokens and bye-words to stigmatize the supporters of government. This disposition may, perhaps, account for some of the extreme expressions used in debate by members of both Houses.

It was maintained by many, that these were mere opinions, and that those who professed them were not of sufficient weight in society, either from wealth, connexion, or talent, to become dangerous; but the history of all countries has shewn that obscure, ignorant, and even infamous persons, professing the relief of national grievances, affecting a love for the people and their rights, and exciting the malignity of the low and turbulent against their superiors, have succeeded in raising commotions by which the stability of well-ordered governments has been shaken and overthrown. The leaders on the present occasion did not confine their efforts to the metropolis and its vicinity, but, by means of their correspondence, extended them to convenient spots near great manufacturing towns, such as Sheffield, Leeds, and Wakefield, at all which delegates from the London Corresponding Society attended, and enforced the sentiments they had before disclosed in their speeches and writings*.

Informed of these facts, both by public notoriety and private communications, government took the necessary measures to avert danger and punish crime. A seizure of arms having been made in Edinburgh, several leading members of both societies in London were apprehended, their papers secured, and, after examination before the Privy Council, they were committed for trial†.

A message from his Majesty informed the House

May.
Arrest of several persons.

12th.
Message from the King.

* Derived from the reports of the committees of both Houses of Parliament, afterward more particularly mentioned, and from the evidence on the trials which took place toward the close of the year.

† They were Thomas Hardy and Daniel Adams, the secretaries of the two societies; John Horne Tooke; the Rev. Jeremiah Joyce, private secretary to Lord Stanhope; John Thelwall, John Augustus Bonney, John Richter, and John Lovett. Others were afterwards added.

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13th.
Mr. Pitt moves
an address.

of Commons of these facts and the grounds of the proceeding, and recommended the adoption of measures for guarding against dangerous designs, and preserving the blessings of the constitution.

Mr. Dundas having presented the papers which had been seized, Mr. Pitt proposed an address of thanks to the King, and a reference of the papers to a committee of secrecy. As they related to transactions of an extraordinary, formidable, and criminal nature, and implicated a great number of persons, secrecy was fitting, lest the measures to be adopted should be evaded through premature disclosures.

Mr. Fox would not oppose the address, but doubted whether the matter before them was fit for their investigation; whether the seizure was constitutional, and the mode of collecting information justifiable. The steps to be adopted demanded the utmost vigilance. He required a precedent, or proof of a distinction between this and former cases, sufficient to justify a recourse to new modes of proceeding. Was the object prosecution? That was already in the hands of the Crown; and he could not suppose an impeachment was intended; for although he would always maintain the inquisitorial right of the House, an impeachment could not properly come from the Crown. Mr. Pitt answered by referring to Laver's plot in 1722, when papers sent to the House, sealed up, were referred to a secret committee; and, the propriety of a committee being admitted, he could not understand how its being secret could be an objection.

Committee
formed.
15th.
Their Report.

The number of the committee was fixed at twenty-one*; and a report was speedily presented, stating that they had already found, in the books and papers submitted to their inspection, a full account of the proceedings of the two societies, who appeared to be closely connected with others in many parts of Great

* The members selected were Mr. Pitt, Mr. Dundas, Mr. Welbore Ellis, Mr. Windham, the Attorney-general, the Solicitor-general, the Lord Advocate of Scotland, Mr. Thomas Grenville, Mr. Steele, the Master of the Rolls, Mr. Jenkinson, Sir H. Houghton, the Earl of Upper Ossory, Mr. Powys, the Earl of Mornington, Lord Mulgrave, Mr. Hawkins Browne, Mr. Anstruther, Mr. Stanley, Mr. Charles Townshend, and Mr. Burke.

Britain and Ireland, and had become daily more and more likely to affect the internal peace and security of these kingdoms, and urgently to require immediate and vigilant attention. They had been almost in constant sitting from the end of 1791, to the 9th of May last; and by a series of resolutions, publications, and correspondence, had been systematically pursuing a settled design to subvert the established constitution, which had of late been openly avowed, and attempted to be carried into full effect. In support of this opinion, were cited their most striking acts and resolutions, from their printing and diffusing Paine's Rights of Man; their addresses to the Jacobin club, and to the National Convention; their correspondence with associated bodies in France; their admission of Roland, Barrère, and St. André, as honorary members; their insertion in their books of the regicide speeches of the two last; and, since the declaration of war had interrupted direct communication, their continued manifestations of attachment to the cause of the French Convention, affectedly following their forms, and even their phrases.

The report then detailed their endeavours to establish a general communication and concert among the other seditious societies in the metropolis, and in different parts of England, Scotland, and Ireland. With the most forward and active they had carried on an immediate correspondence, earnestly recommending the formation of a National Convention, and stated the resolutions of the Corresponding Society, after the late convictions—"That law ceases to be an object of obedience whenever it becomes an instrument of oppression. That we call to mind, with the deepest satisfaction, the merited fate of the infamous Jefferies, who, for his iniquitous sentences was torn to pieces by a brave and injured people; and those who imitate his example deserve his fate. That we see with regret, but without fear, that the period is fast approaching when the liberties of Britons must depend, not upon reason, to which they have long appealed, nor on their powers of expressing it, but on their

“ firm and undaunted resolution to oppose tyranny
“ by the same means by which it is exercised.”

The report also contained the address of the Corresponding Society to the people of Great Britain and Ireland, on the twentieth of January, which, after stating the means by which they were deprived of the benefits of Magna Charta and the Bill of Rights, and reprobating the various acts of magistracy and the courts in England and Scotland, said: “men, in civilized society, are bound to seek redress of grievances from the laws, as long as it can be obtained by the laws. But our common master, whom we serve (whose law is a law of liberty, and whose service is perfect freedom) has taught us not to expect to gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles. We must have redress from our own laws, and not from the laws of our plunderers, enemies, and oppressors.” They then resolved that, during the session, their general committee should meet daily, to watch the proceedings of Parliament, and of administration. And that, upon the first introduction of a bill or motion, inimical to the liberties of the people, such as for landing foreign troops, suspending the Habeas Corpus Act, proclaiming martial law, or for preventing the people from meeting in societies for constitutional information, or any other innovation of a similar nature, the general committee should issue summonses to the delegates of each division, and to the secretaries of the different affiliated and corresponding societies, to call a general Convention of the people, for the purpose of taking such measures into their consideration.

Proud of this production, the society resolved that one hundred thousand copies should be printed and distributed, and added, as a fit accompaniment, fifteen toasts, given at their anniversary dinner, extolling their own friends as virtuous and spirited citizens, devoting to death those whom they denominated apostates, and wishing success to the arms of freedom, against whomsoever directed; and confusion to despots, with whomsoever allied.

These resolutions were conveyed to the Society for

Constitutional Information, with a letter (27th March), requesting their sentiments respecting the important measures demanded by the present juncture of affairs; requiring a full and explicit declaration, "Whether the late illegal and unheard-of prosecutions and sentences should determine the friends of freedom to abandon their cause, or excite them to pursue a radical reform, with an ardour proportioned to the magnitude of the object, and with a zeal as distinguished on their part, as the treachery of others in the same glorious cause was notorious." They were required to determine whether or not they would be ready, when called upon to act, in conjunction with other societies, to obtain a fair representation of the people? Whether they concurred in the necessity of a speedy convention for a redress of grievances, which can only be effectually attained by a full and fair representation.

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In answer, the Corresponding Society received assurances of approbation and co-operation.

A paper published in consequence of a meeting of the Corresponding Society at Chalk Farm, on the fourteenth of April, was also noticed, containing the usual inflammatory excitations, slightly covered by pacific expressions, and a vehement denunciation of those who said that the present was not the time for reform, and that innovation might but produce disturbance.

Possibly, some portion of their fury may have been inspired by a recent correspondence with the "Friends of the People." To a letter addressed to Mr. Sheridan, as chairman of that society, an answer had been returned (11th April), civil, and even flattering, in its terms, but expressing apprehensions that the measure proposed would furnish the enemies of reform with the means of calumniating its advocates, and, far from forwarding the cause, would deter many from countenancing that which they approved. The "Friends of the People," therefore, declined sending delegates to the proposed Convention.

At the same Chalk Farm meeting, resolutions were passed, decrying many proceedings of Parliament,

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ironically complimenting the House of Lords on their proceeding respecting Lord Stanhope's motion, which would have considerable effect in convincing the country of their true dignity and utility. They voted, also, addresses to Gerald, Hamilton Rowan, John Philpot Curran, his admirable and energetic defender; the Society of United Irishmen; the persons under sentence in Scotland, and to their defenders, with felicitations to Mr. Thomas Walker.

On the facts thus disclosed, the committee felt it impossible not to conclude, that it was intended to assemble a meeting, which, under the name of a general Convention, might take upon itself the character of a general representation of the people. However, at different periods, the term "parliamentary reform" might have been employed, it was obvious that the views of the societies were not to be prosecuted by any application to Parliament, but by an open attempt to supersede the House of Commons and assume to itself all the functions and powers of a national legislature.

Mr. Pitt's motion to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act.

Mr. Pitt recapitulated this conclusion, observing, that if the House entertained the same conviction, they would undoubtedly agree, that, without the loss of one moment, the executive power should be armed with additional means, sufficient to stop the further progress, and prevent the final execution of such a plan. He expatiated on the most important facts in the report, and moved for leave to bring in a bill for empowering his Majesty to secure and detain persons suspected of conspiring against his person and government.

Opposed by
Mr. Fox.

Mr. Fox said, he had expected to hear something new, but was extremely surprised on finding that the eminent men who framed this report should have recommended a remedy so sudden, so violent, so alarming, on the foundation of facts that had been notorious for years. That the committee should so solemnly invite the attention of the House, to tell them of resolutions of a society, which had been published in every newspaper; to state in a pompous manner addresses to the National Convention, with their answers; to inform the House of matters which administration had

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seen passing before them day after day; and then to require them immediately to consider on the adoption of the most violent of all means, to terminate that which had so long been suffered to pass in silence. A Convention, formed like that in Edinburgh for obtaining a reform in Parliament, was not necessarily seditious. He did not know that Mr. Pitt had been, but he himself was, a member of a Convention in 1780; they were chosen as delegates and had meetings in London and Westminster; and in the most public manner held correspondence with societies in Yorkshire and other places; the House refused to recognise them as delegates, but received their petition as individuals, as matter of right. A scandalous negligence must that have been through which Ireland obtained a free constitution, and the Roman Catholics of that country, by means of a convention, their late privileges. He would not say that the proposed Convention would be meritorious; but it would be dangerous to declare it unlawful.

He spoke with great severity of the late legal proceedings in Scotland; and of the attempts of the Convention rather as matter of ridicule than alarm. But suppose this Convention assembled by Mr. Hardy and Mr. Adams, and that they entertained the views ascribed to them; still the measure proposed was infinitely more mischievous than that which it proposed to remedy. Were we to give up the very best part of our constitution; the right which every man enjoyed of delivering his sentiments on the affairs of government for the benefit of the public, would at once be at an end. Such a measure, it was true, had been adopted in the reign of King William, and also in the rebellions of 1715 and 1745, when there were armies in the kingdom in favour of a popish claimant to the throne, and the people divided in opinion on the contest. Was there any such prince? were there any such circumstances now? We saw only a number of individuals without arms, without means of any kind, talking of a reform in Parliament. The business had been brought forward with unwarranted precipitation: a call of the

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Other
members.

House would have been proper on a question of such magnitude; but a fancied terror had intruded itself upon the faculties of several members, and prepared them to sacrifice their duty to notions of supposed expediency and groundless alarm.

Mr. M. Robinson, Mr. Lambton, Mr. Harrison, and Mr. Grey, added little to Mr. Fox's arguments, and Mr. Jekyll considered the report as intended only for purposes of alarm. Some members of the committee, he said, had been originally alarmists; but it looked as if those who had taken the disease in a natural way, had been infected by the company they kept; their mountain had produced a mouse, and the minister had brought forward a most violent, destructive, and daring measure, on grounds most miserably flimsy and ridiculous.

Mr. Sheridan.

Mr. Sheridan began to speak, amid cries of question; and whether this mark of impatience ruffled his temper, or he had previously wrought himself up to an extraordinary degree of fervour, he delivered himself in terms unusually harsh and opprobrious. The minister, he said, in a manner unfounded, unjust, and impolitic, falsely told the French that the people of this country were disaffected, and to be restrained only by the most harsh measures. The report afforded a subject of joy and congratulation; for, after all the exertions of this Committee of Public Safety, after the tremendous alarms which had ever frightened the whole country, what was to be found in this famous report of the British Barrère? Copies of idle papers, some of which had been published and circulated two years, and all before the commencement of the last session of Parliament. One fact alone was any thing like new—that these societies had been providing arms; and this remained merely an unproved assertion. He made many observations on the legality of conventions, and the benefits which had arisen from them, on the abruptness with which the bill had been introduced, and on the probability that ministers would exercise its powers on slight and frivolous pretexts, and imprison men merely for differing with them in

opinion. He trusted they would reflect on their future responsibility ; and, although he was not of a sanguinary disposition, he should not be sorry to find that he who should advise his Majesty to pass such a bill, so hurried through the House, should lose his head upon the scaffold.

“ When the broad axe of vengeance,” Mr. Burke exclaimed, “ is so broadly displayed to view, it may “ not be amiss to consider what is that mighty provocation which seems to call for it? It is simply this, “ that if a minister should advise his Majesty to comply with the wishes of the other two branches of the “ legislature, he shall, for such offence, be sentenced “ to the guillotine.” The measure was salutary, though apparently severe ; it was withholding, for a short time, the liberty of the country, to preserve it for ever.

Mr. Burke.

On a division, the motion was carried by a majority exceeding five to one*.

Motion carried.

Mr. Grey then moved for a call of the House on that day fortnight ; but Mr. Pitt opposed it, as calculated only for vexatious delay.

Mr. Grey moves a call of the House. Opposed.

Mr. Fox, repeating many of his former observations, added, that since “ terror was the order of the “ day,” opinions created by this measure might for a while be stifled ; but they would but rankle in secret ; curses would follow, “ not loud but deep,” and what might be the final event no man could say ! Should this bill pass, it might not be of any utility to continue an opposition. If violences should succeed, he did not think that one head in that House would be more secure than another.

Mr. Fox.

In his reply, Mr. Grey considered Mr. Pitt’s haughtiness as the overflowing of an arrogant mind, swelled by the too long enjoyment of ill-gotten power. He admired his abilities, and had never denied them ; but talents, however transcendant, when unsupported by honour or honesty, should never meet respect from him. Notwithstanding the reflections cast on parlia-

Mr. Grey.

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Efforts at
delay.

mentary reform, it was one he would never desert under any change of time or circumstances; nor would he, to preserve power or gratify idle ambition, ever become an apostate. His motion was negatived by more than six to one*.

The bill was then pressed forward, through its various stages, up to the report of the committee, when the House adjourned, at three o'clock in the morning, for twelve hours. In the course of the night, no less than eleven divisions were taken; a proceeding too much marked with spiteful littleness to be worthy of such a leader as Mr. Fox, or creditable to the character and abilities of some of his party. No hope of success could have actuated them; for on no division did their force exceed, and in some it did not even reach, the comparative numbers already mentioned†. If the hope was entertained of making a favourable impression on the public by their speeches, that was frustrated by the exclusion of strangers from the gallery after the second division. Ministers appeared sensible that the aim of their opponents would be delay; for, except those which were absolutely necessary, they made no observations and afforded no themes for animadversion.

17th.
Mr. Sheridan.

When the House re-assembled, Mr. Sheridan moved an adjournment, on account of the absence of Mr. Pitt, who was not in his place precisely at four o'clock. This effort produced a desultory debate, in which the propriety of delay and of the measure were blended; among other things it was said that if time were allowed, the House would have their table covered with petitions: it failed on a division‡.

Third reading.

At length the third reading was moved, and a discussion was maintained till three o'clock in the morning (Sunday), in which former topics were repeated, with the addition of much personality and reproach.

Mr. Grey.

Mr. Grey, the first to oppose the measure, made a violent personal attack on Mr. Pitt. On the arma-

* 201 to 32.

† The division most favourable to them was 33 to 197; the least, 16 to 132.

‡ 151 to 37

ment against Russia he had carried his measure, with a triumphant majority, through Parliament; but when he found the public voice decidedly against it, he had "dragged his parliamentary majorities through the dirt," and relinquished his object. In 1782, he pretended sincerity for a parliamentary reform; but, being defeated, abandoned it for ever; and William Pitt, the reformer of that day, was now William Pitt, the prosecutor, aye, and persecutor too, of reformers. He who thought it fit to inflame the passions of the people, and to instigate them to a contempt for the House of Commons then, would not now allow them to judge of their own rights and dearest interests, but persecuted, with the real bitterness of an apostate, his own partner in the question of parliamentary reform. He had that day been examining as a prisoner John Horne Tooke, for persevering in his sentiments. Supposing the societies dangerous, was it to be apprehended that the convention so much talked of could assemble with such speed that government could not prevent danger? No; the real reason was, that if the minister did not pass his bill by stealth, the public would not suffer it to pass at all: were time afforded, the deception would be discovered, and the efforts of those who opposed the measure gratefully acknowledged: perhaps, the remaining trick the minister had to play might be a speedy dissolution of Parliament; but he believed it would be his last.

Alluding to the professed expectation of numerous petitions, Mr. Canning said, he was not to be intimidated by them, while convinced he was acting for the benefit of his country. While he conscientiously exercised the authority delegated to him, he was not to be biassed by instructions from any quarter. Ministers were threatened with the vengeance of the people, and Parliament with a diminution of its numbers by secession; the direful consequences which would result from such a proceeding would be counterbalanced by the good effects of the present judicious measure.

Mr. Dundas had no hesitation in declaring that a convention for the purpose of obtaining universal suf-

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frage and annual parliaments must be subversive of the constitution, and followed by anarchy and confusion. He vindicated Mr. Pitt, who, far from appearing as the advocate of those measures, had brought forward a distinct proposition for reform, in which he disclaimed any such intention. If the Duke of Richmond could be shewn to have been a friend to such a system, it only proved that a very wise man might entertain a very foolish notion.

Mr. Sheridan.

In a speech, where wit and argument were blended, Mr. Sheridan decried the measure and satirized its authors. The supposed conspiracy was of a very extraordinary description; it was carried on in the presence of every body; it was an open, garrulous, and stalking conspiracy. The conspirators met in gardens, fields, and public-houses; announced and even aggravated their purposes. The acts of ministers had been uniformly adverse to their purposes. Their proclamation had produced tumult and insurrection; their spreading abroad a host of spies and informers had increased the general turbulence; their last effort was one of severe prosecutions, and the result, according to their own statement, was "that a great part of the nation was actually in a state of rebellion!" Arms were mentioned, but it did not appear whether or not the dread of a church and king mob had determined men to provide their houses with muskets. As the origin of the sentiments of the societies, he referred in the accustomed manner to the speeches and writings of Mr. Pitt, Mr. Burke, and the Duke of Richmond.

Mr. Fox.

Mr. Fox described the measure as unconstitutional and unnecessary. It had been said, that to the existing evil of jacobinical doctrines, remedies ought to be applied in gradation; first mild, then less mild, afterward severe, and through all the degrees of severity. The present measure, then, was only one step in the ladder; the Alien Bill was an anodyne, the Treasonable Correspondence Bill a gentle medicine, and the present was resorted to as a severer remedy; should this also fail, others were in store of still greater violence. If, next year, enough of the constitution should remain to

enable him to put a question in his place, when this experiment too had failed, he might ask, would the minister prohibit all meetings of the people, debar them from all discussions on political subjects, and prevent all intercourse between man and man? Would the power of arbitrary imprisonment be made perpetual? Would they still further proceed in exact and horrid imitation of the men who held France in anarchy, and establish a revolutionary tribunal? Was every man who had "liberty" in his mouth to be considered a traitor, merely because liberty had been abused, and carried to the most shocking licentiousness? Liberty was the essence of the British constitution. King, lords, commons, and courts of judicature, were but the forms; the basis of the constitution was liberty, the first principle of which was government by law, and which this day they were going to suspend. It was said, that the example of France threatened not only this, but all the countries of the world; even America felt alarmed; but her conduct had been, in every respect, the reverse of ours, and in a very particular manner he displayed the difference.

Of the persons who composed the societies he knew but little, nor could he be supposed to entertain any partiality for them, since, in their speeches and publications, they used the same expressions of the opposition, and of him personally, that they applied to the administration. Their plan of universal suffrage, he uniformly considered as wild and ridiculous. A learned and ingenious person had said to the Duke of Richmond, with as much truth as wit, "My lord, I think the best part of your grace's plan is its utter impracticability." He could not agree with the opinion, that rather than continue the present state of representation, he would incur all the hazards of universal suffrage; but he was ready to say, that the measures of last year, the horrid and detestable prosecutions, the scandalous sentences that had been passed, and the scandalous way in which they had been executed, did not make him less than heretofore desirous of some

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Mr. Pitt.

reform, that should protect the country against these violations of good sense, propriety, and justice.

To the speech from which these passages are selected, Mr. Pitt made an effectual and comprehensive answer. Admitting that the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act was a matter of great importance, he stated the real question to be, whether the danger with which the constitution was threatened was or was not greater than any which could result from putting into the hands of government a more than ordinary portion of power, for the purpose of resisting a most dangerous conspiracy. It had been stated that the measures of government displayed a strong imitation of the French system. The grounds on which this assertion was founded were perhaps known to those who advanced it; but they had never taken the trouble of explaining them to the House. It had been clearly proved that a party was formed, whose avowed system aimed at the destruction of all civilized order, the annihilation of Parliament, and the subversion of the constitution by the introduction of Jacobinism, which threatened the dissolution of every established government in Europe. To prevent the calamitous effects of this dangerous conspiracy, a legal measure, limited in its duration, and which the experience and wisdom of our ancestors had approved and found highly beneficial, was proposed. Did this bear any analogy to the situation of France, under the influence of the present ruling power, mis-called a government?—a power which, to support its reprobated, detestable, and presumptuous usurpation, had recourse to every stratagem that fraud, robbery, and injustice could devise. Was it supposed that the progress of a Jacobin Convention, were it once established, could be stopped, and its consequences avoided, by indulgence and concession? The societies declared that they would make no compromise; and it must be clear that no concession short of a surrender of the constitution would satisfy them. There did not exist the most remote analogy between societies formed with an intention legally and constitutionally to improve the

representation, and that convention proposed by the Jacobin societies, whose object was the destruction of Parliament, and not its improvement. As well might government sanction conspiracy and assassination, as give protection to these societies on the supposition of any legal or virtuous purpose in their system.

A few further observations were made in explanation of the proceedings of the Friends of the People, and denying that the Constitutional Society had ever formed a secret committee with the Corresponding Society.

Two divisions were taken on the question that the bill be read a third time, and that it should pass; on both, the opposition produced very inconsiderable numbers*.

Lord Grenville presented to the upper House a message similar to that which had been laid before the Commons; the bill which had been passed was brought up, together with a copy of the first report, and referred to a secret committee†. Their first report was speedily prepared, and very short, asserting generally an entire conviction of the existence and objects of a conspiracy, and promising further inquiries.

On the motion for a second reading of the bill, a strenuous debate was maintained, but was only distinguished by so much novelty as arose from the particular situation and the manners of the speakers. Earl Stanhope considered it a system for erecting a Bastille, and establishing lettres de cachet, by which any man might be imprisoned for any period, at the will of ministers, without proof, without reason, without trial, and, after all, without redress. The charge against the members of these societies was, that they had dared to call a convention: a meeting,—an assembly—give it what name you please—had been agreed upon by them; but such a meeting was perfectly legal, sanctioned by great law writers and by eminent statesmen; and the fear which was expressed was as visionary as

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Bill passed.

17th.
Proceedings in
the Lords.

19th.
20th.
Their first re-
port.

Second
reading.

Earl
Stanhope.

* 33 to 180, and 28 to 146.

† Consisting of the Lord Chancellor, Lord Privy Seal, Dukes of Leeds and Portland, the Earls of Hardwicke, Carlisle, Carnarvon, Chatham, and Mansfield.

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the windmill giants of Don Quixote. Delay was urged by the Earl of Lauderdale and the Marquis of Lansdowne, as a petition might be presented by the city of London, where it was suspected that general opinion was not so favourable to ministers as it had been last year.

Lord
Thurlow.

In support of the measure, Lord Thurlow made a wise and discriminative speech. The general principle upon which the bill was founded was necessity; and when once that necessity was established, there was nothing in the measure to create any objection. There were parts of the report, which, if they could be supported by evidence, might amount to treason; particularly where it was said that the societies intended to prosecute their system by force, and in opposition to the known laws of the country. This sort of declaration required punishment; and had its authors been punished at the time, it would have prevented the offence committed by their successors*.

Lord Mans-
field.

The Earl of Mansfield remarked on the obscurity of the persons who composed the societies, as a circumstance that would render the success of their intentions more dreadful; and the question for their lordships to consider, was, "Would they nip the seeds of anarchy in the bud, or suffer them to be blown abroad by every wind? Would they smother the flame on its first appearance, or suffer it to burst into a conflagration?" And the Earl of Carlisle reminded their lordships of Lord George Gordon's mob, which, although an object of ridicule at first, had grown to a height sufficiently serious to awe the legislature and subvert government for a week.

Lord
Chancellor.

In closing the debate, the Lord Chancellor, after clearing away the error that the bill was a general suspension of the Habeas Corpus, that no action would lie for false imprisonment, that it was a full indemnity to ministers for all acts, and gave them the power of *lettres de cachet*, said, it had been admitted,

* Toward the close of his speech, Lord Thurlow animadverted severely on a publication on the subject of Mr. Hastings's trial. It was a report of a Committee of the House of Commons, and a discussion arose on it which will be mentioned in a future page.

that if there was a convention or meeting which aimed at giving laws to Parliament and the country, this measure would have been wise and salutary. The documents proved the intentions of the societies; and the assertion that their object was a parliamentary reform, no more legalized the proposed meeting, than "God save the King," written at the bottom of a seditious libel, could divest it of its culpable tendency.

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Two divisions took place; one on the question of adjournment, which was lost; the other on the third reading, which was carried*.

Bill passed.

Earl Stanhope signed alone the following pithy protest: "Dissentient; Because I abhor the idea of establishing a dangerous and unconstitutional system of letters of cachet in this country." Another of greater length was put on the Journals by the Duke of Bedford and the Earls of Albemarle, Lauderdale, and Derby.

Protests.

After the bill had passed, Mr. Dundas presented a second report, detailing at length the votes and measures of the societies, and the resolution for procuring arms; with a copious appendix, shewing, from avowed publications and their obvious context, the pretended and the real use for which the arms were designed. The publication of this document having produced a letter from Mr. Grey to Mr. Pitt, with inclosures to shew that a letter, supposed to have been sent from the Friends of the People to the Convention in Scotland, had been issued without the consent of the society, a supplementary report, containing these documents, was laid before the House.

June 6.
House of
Commons.
Second
Report.

16th.

On this occasion, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Grey, Mr. Francis, Mr. Lambton, Major Maitland, and Mr. Whitbread, protested against the imputation which seemed to connect their society with the Convention; and insisted that a letter from Daniel Stuart, their secretary, which had given rise to it, was a mere unauthorized, personal, and private communication.

Friends of the
People dis-
claim the other
societies.

Mr. Dundas congratulated the House, the country, Mr. Dundas.

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and magistrates of Scotland, on this conversation, which afforded a full answer to all the calumnies which had been so industriously circulated against the Court of Justiciary for their laudable discharge of their duty ; since it manifested that those very gentlemen, who had been most forward in censuring that magistracy, were now anxious only to fly from the charge of being implicated with the members of that British Convention.

Mr. Fox.

Mr. Fox declared that he retained, in their full force, all the sentiments he had expressed on the conduct of the magistrates of Edinburgh ; denied the legality of seizing Mr. Skirving's papers, and could not agree that no society should be allowed to exist, if its principles were disavowed by all parties in that House.

House of
Lords.
Second
Report

A similar report was presented to the House of Lords, disclosing, in ample detail, the same matters, and illustrating, by drawings, the form of various iron instruments, and heads of pikes, which had been found in the shops of a smith, named Orrock, and a member of the Convention named Watt.

13th.
Address
moved.
Lord
Abingdon.

Lord Grenville moved an address to his Majesty, on which there was a short debate, remarkable only for a speech of the Earl of Abingdon, who said that the report from the secret committee having referred to projects of the most desperate and flagitious nature, respecting the members of both Houses, he had, as a specimen, a letter addressed to him from Glasgow, inclosing a paper intitled " A copy of that most extraordinary speech, delivered in the House of Lords by " Earl Stanhope, on the twenty-second of January, " 1794, for the restoration of peace, and acknow- " ledging the French Republic." And the letter was as follows:—" This most excellent speech has been " reprinted at Glasgow. Many thousands of it are " now in circulation. Your ' horse-laugh ' is marked, " and will be properly attended to."—" It is for this " answer, then," his lordship exclaimed, " that I am, " thank God ! a marked man ; for who of your lord- " ships, calling himself an Englishman, would not be " proud of such a mark ? But I mention this now, not

“ in address to those of your lordships who have any
 “ respect for your own honour and dignity, but in
 “ admonition to those sans-culotte lords, who, in carry-
 “ ing on their intrigues, and forming their parties
 “ within these walls, are as forgetful of themselves, as
 “ they are dead to the mischief which they so reprehens-
 “ sibly occasion without.”

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The address was agreed to, and ordered to be sent down to the Commons for their concurrence.

Address
 agreed to.

Mr. Pitt moved accordingly: he was answered with much vigour by Mr. Fox; but no topics were introduced which had not been often discussed. A proposed amendment was rejected, and the original address carried without a division.

Adopted by
 the Commons.

This active, important, and protracted session was terminated by a speech from the throne, in which his Majesty, advertng to the events of the war, expressed the high gratification he felt on reflecting on the uniform skill and bravery of his fleets and armies, the rapid and valuable acquisitions made in the East and West Indies, and the successful operations carried on in the Mediterranean; and he trusted Parliament would not suffer their zeal to be abated, or their perseverance shaken, by the recent successes of the enemy in the Netherlands. He acknowledged also their diligence in the investigation of the designs which had been formed against the government and constitution; and thanked them for the confidence reposed in him, of which he would make a vigorous and prudent use, for the protection and security of his people; and had no doubt of speedily and effectually repressing every attempt to disturb the public peace, and of defeating the wicked designs which had been in agitation.

July 11.
 Termination
 of the session.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTY-SIXTH.

1794.

Improved state of the French.—Execution of Custine, Houchard, Beauharnois, and others.—Conduct and state of the Allies.—Dissatisfaction of the King of Prussia.—Conduct of the Empress of Russia.—General views of the Allies.—Preparations in Flanders.—Pichegru commands the army of the north.—Force of the Allies.—Plans of the campaign.—Efforts of the Emperor.—Conduct of Prussia.—The Emperor takes the command.—His proclamation.—His reception in Flanders.—Movement of Pichegru.—Invasion of West Flanders.—Progress of the campaign.—Moucron—Courtray—Menin—Landrecies.—Battle of Tournay—Courtray.—The French cross the Sambre.—Battle of Tourcoing.—Battle of Pont-Achin.—Savage decree of the Convention.—General orders of the Duke of York.—Robespierre's observations.—Progress of the French.—Defeated at Charleroi.—State of Flanders.—Ypres and other towns taken.—Battle of Fleurus.—Arrival of Lord Moira.—Success of the French.—Campaign on the Rhine—Interior of France.—Reign of Terror.—State of the Convention.—Committees of Public and General Safety.—State of Parties.—Hébert—Danton—Robespierre.—Hébert commences hostilities.—Fall of him and his party.—Fall of Danton and his party.—Position of Robespierre.—Continuance of cruelty.—Murder of the Princess Elizabeth.—Madame Dubarry.—Measures of Robespierre.—Acknowledgment of a Supreme Being.—Report of the Convention.—Festivals decreed.—Popularity of these proceedings.—Celebration in Paris.—Conduct of Robespierre—his disappointment—his jealousy.—Attack on Collot d'Herbois.—Supposed attempt on Robespierre.—Sanguinary decree proposed—opposed—passed.—Further

opposition formed.—The decree modified.—The modification annulled.—Further proceedings of Robespierre.—Conflict in the Convention.—At the Jacobins.—Final Contest. Insurrection against the Convention.—Their measures.—Proceedings at the Hotel de Ville.—Second arrest of Robespierre—his agony—condemnation—and execution.—Character.

IN the commencement and progress of the present campaign, a striking demonstration was established of the fallibility of political prognostications, however strongly founded on reason, and fortified by deductions from experience. Financial insolvency, the absence of a regular and accredited government, a plebeian tyranny which spurned all rights of person or property, ruled without law, and punished without remorse, the annihilation of commerce, the pressure of famine, internal commotions, the destruction of religion and avowal of atheism, would, in a theoretical treatise, have been displayed as sure indications of national infirmity, certain preludes to approaching subjugation and ruin. From these unpromising causes, France derived the effects of uncontrolled government at home, and of military strength sufficient to resist the attacks of bravery and discipline, to free herself from the pressure of invasion, and to acquire by conquest a great extension of territory and power. By the enforced acceptance of depreciated assignats as money, by the severe laws against the hoarding of specie, or retention of the precious metals, aided by the laws of requisition, and the plunder carried on in domiciliary visits, considerable funds were acquired; not only the individuals called out by the decree for a levy en masse, but the youth of France in general, seeing their relatives and connexions led to prison or to slaughter for undefined crimes, resorted joyfully to the standards of the generals, feeling that in the camp alone, they could escape persecution, or expect safety. By these means twelve hundred thousand men were enrolled, of whom, allowing for garrison and domestic duties, seven hundred

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1791.
Improved state
of the French.

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Execution of
Custine, Hou-
chard, and
others.

thousand were sent to the frontiers. By means of requisitions and the enforced reception of assignats, they were armed, accoutred, and better fed than they could have hoped to be at home. The events at the close of the preceding year, the extravagant eulogies, lofty vaunts, and boundless professions of the Convention, animated the zeal and increased the devotedness of their troops. Nor were their leaders permitted to expect that by any means they should render themselves dangerous to the republic. That the time was not yet arrived when the army, confiding in, and devoted to, some successful general, might make him formidable to his masters, and control or even subvert the government, Lafayette and Dumouriez may stand as conspicuous instances. The perpetual inspection of the commissioners, the vengeful proceedings of the Revolutionary Tribunal, and the ready applause given by the people to all acts of violence, formed the security of the government; neither the senate, the clubs, nor the army, would interfere. Thus, Custine was executed for having failed to perform all that the Convention thought he might have achieved; Houchard, for not having annihilated the Duke of York and his army; Beauharnois, and several others, for crimes of which no distinct specification could be made: noble birth, attachment to any disfavoured principle in religion or politics, or even an undefined offence, was sufficient, when the destruction of an officer was resolved on; the army acquiesced; and generals were so sensible of their peril, that some rushed into the arms of certain destruction, while others committed suicide, rather than meet the ignominious fate which awaited them on any accusation, however capricious or unfounded. On the whole, the rulers of France congratulated themselves on the termination of the late eventful year, so different from what its commencement augured; they found their authority established, insurrection repressed, their military recruited, their arms generally respected, if not universally successful, and their general situation more encouraging than their partisans could have hoped, or their opponents could have supposed.

The causes of this alteration are not to be found in the exertions of the republicans only, astonishing and prodigious as they were; the allies contributed to their own disasters, and the present aspect of their proceedings portended, if not a total dissolution of their union, at least a coldness of co-operation, from which no beneficial results could be derived. The desire of Austria to recover the dominions of Alsace and Lorraine, so long severed from the empire and annexed to France*, had been shown on every turn of success and in every gleam of hope. On taking possession of Quesnoi, Condé, and Valenciennes, the royal arms were not substituted for the republican, but the imperial superseded them; and the effect was, that even in Brussels placards were exhibited on the walls, inviting the French emigrants to take up arms, lest their unhappy country should, like Poland, be dismembered. Dumouriez was suspected to be the author, and efforts were used to apprehend him, but, timely apprized of his danger, he fled†. The proclamation of the Prince of Cobourg, after the capture of Condé, was immeasurably injurious to the common cause. It declared that the town, fortress, and district, having been subjugated to the power of the Emperor, by the brave troops under his command, he took possession in the name of his imperial Majesty; he treated the place as a conquered country; claimed to exercise authority by right of arms, and declared that all clubs and political associations, of whatever description, must be immediately suppressed, as he should punish severely, and by military process, all who participated in such meetings, or permitted them to be held in their houses. An imperial and royal junto was established in pursuance of this proclamation, which, by its first mandate,

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* Conduct and
state of the
allies.

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* In 1648. Definitively in 1766.

† *Mémoires d'un Homme d'État*, tome ii. p. 331. On the subject of the Emperor's conduct in this transaction, the learned and intelligent Mr. Butler (*Reminiscences*, vol. ii. p. 120) says—"A gentleman was with Mr. Burke while he read a letter, just received by him, which gave him an account of the surrender of Valenciennes; and that when he came to a part in it which mentioned that the Emperor had planted the Austrian flag on the walls of the town, he threw down the letter in a passion, exclaiming, 'Ah! le scélérat; cela vaudra cent mille hommes aux sans-culottes.'" "

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decreed that all authorities constituted since the revolution should be abolished, and superseded by provisional magistrates; all laws relating to general police and to property were re-established on their ancient footing; the sequestration was removed from the estates of emigrants; but these persons were not permitted to abide in the conquered country, unless they had formerly enjoyed possessions, or a habitation there. Every emigrant Frenchman, whether constitutionalist or pure royalist, felt equal horror at the projected dismemberment of the realm. Monsieur, although without power, and dependent even for present protection, sent to all the allied monarchs his protest against the proceeding, but in vain*. The subsequent proclamation of Wurmser placed the intentions of the Emperor beyond all doubt, and excited the strong and manifest jealousy and disapprobation of the King of Prussia.

Dissatisfaction
of the King of
Prussia.

That monarch, disappointed in his first generous project in favour of the dethroned sovereign, baffled in the result of the former campaign, feeling heavily the pressure of the war, sensible that the manner in which it was conducted tended in no degree to his advantage, but to the aggrandisement of a rival from whose power he had every thing to fear, and from whose attachment he had nothing to hope, and allured also by prospects in Poland, had been, for some time, a tardy and reluctant co-operator in the general cause. But while a repugnance to the structure of the alliance gained ground, and was more and more avowed in the Prussian court and camp, it was not easy for the King to sever himself from the union to which he was pledged, or give reasons for doing so which would not have been stamped with injustice and dishonour. The possessor of Dantzick and Thorn could not have denounced the acquisition of territory by mere right of conquest; the ally of Russia, in her projects against Poland, and the expectant participator in the further spoils of that kingdom, could not have raised his voice in favour of the rights of a monarch, whose claims were no better than those of the sovereign he was labouring to despoil and

* *Homme d'État*, tome ii. p. 327.

depose. In fact, the conduct of Prussia, although not hostile, was little calculated to assist the general cause; and there was in reserve a contemplated pacification, if not union, with France. Conferences had been held between the Marquis de Lucchesini, and some deputies and generals of the republic, which, if they had no other effect, tended to allay the hostile feeling between the two countries*. But these conferences were supposed to relate to other objects; Wurmser avowed his jealousy of a secret negotiation between Prussia and France, for the effecting of certain secularizations by which Prussia was to be aggrandized at the expense of the empire. As men are ever disposed to attribute to others the evil intentions which they are themselves contemplating, the Prussian cabinet affected to believe that Austria and England were disposed to negotiate separately with the republic, and that the Emperor saw with jealousy the portion assigned to the house of Brandenburg, in the partition of Poland†. The real bent of Prussian policy was shown by a treaty for exchange of prisoners, which amounted to an explicit acknowledgment of the French republic. In the month of March, he announced his determination to assist in the present war, to the extent of his contingent as a member of the empire only, and had given orders for the retreat of his troops accordingly; this measure was, for the time, averted by the subsidiary treaty with England; but the selfish and sordid spirit displayed on the occasion left no room for the expectation of any sincere or cordial aid‡.

The Empress of Russia had always strongly expressed her horror at the proceedings of the French revolutionists; and when Monsieur published his proclamation, after the murder of his brother, she alone fully recognised his title to the regency, annulled the treaty which she had concluded with France seven years before, forbad all commercial intercourse between her subjects and the republicans, and commanded all

July 9.

Conduct of the
Empress of
Russia.

* *Homme d'Etat*, tome ii. p. 378.

† *Règne de Frederic Guillaume II.* tome iii. p. 85.

‡ *Homme d'Etat*, tome ii. p. 498, et seqq.

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Frenchmen to quit her territories, unless they would abjure the principles of the revolution, and renounce all connexion with their country. She further declared that, in the spring, her grand fleet, conveying forty thousand troops, should join with that of Great Britain. These promises were not fulfilled, nor were the flattering prospects realized; yet the Empress was not altogether to be blamed for fickleness or indecision. To execute her plans, she required a considerable subsidy from England; but the minister, relying confidently on the powers of Austria and Prussia, was unwilling to render the war more complicated; he could not meet Parliament as a party to political declarations which went even to the extreme of rejecting every thing which had occurred in France for so many years; he refused the additional subsidy, and Catherine, in consequence, confined her efforts within the limits of her last convention, sending only a squadron to cruise in the Baltic and the northern sea, to prevent the commerce of neutral nations with France. Poland too, with the Empress, as with the King of Prussia, formed an obstacle to magnanimous resolutions, or powerful exertions*.

General views
of the allies.

It was too obvious to be disguised, that the alliance of European sovereigns was not framed for any general purpose; but that each power had a separate view and peculiar interest of its own; if, from the pursuit of it, general good could ensue, they were not unwilling to see it; but their ultimate aim was acquisition and aggrandisement to themselves. Had their intentions been sincerely directed to the security of their own dominions, by repression of the principles which the revolutionists of France were busily employed in disseminating; had they really sought security, where alone it could be found, in the destruction of the republican power, that could best have been effected by strenuously assisting those Frenchmen who were in arms for the re-establishment of monarchy; nor was it necessary, in the first instance, to define whether the li-

* *Homme d'État*, tome i. p. 456; tome ii. pp. 191, 330.

mitations imposed by the constitution should be dispensed with or retained. Without recurring to the causes or the policy of the first emigration, it is sufficient to observe that the emigrants were now in arms, ready to assert their rights and maintain their principles; but on all occasions they were treated by the allied powers as men not to be trusted, although their own interests were most intimately concerned, and where every honourable feeling was put to daily torture. Even the brave inhabitants of Lyons, Marseilles, and La Vendée, were not only left unaided, but, by an unaccountable oversight, to use the lightest term, were made victims to the wrath of their ferocious countrymen. "By the capitulations of Mentz and Valenciennes," Mr. Burke has observed, "the Christian royalists were excluded from any participation in the cause of the combined powers. They were considered as the outlaws of Europe. Two armies were, in fact, sent against them. One (that which surrendered at Mentz) was very near overpowering the Christians of Poitou, and the other (that surrendered at Valenciennes) actually crushed the people whom oppression and despair had driven to resistance at Lyons*."

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Thus, after a campaign which had cost two hundred thousand men, the force of the republicans was quadrupled in numbers; the spirit of their troops was ardent and sanguine, while their adversaries, who could with difficulty repair their comparatively small losses, found their energies repressed by the uncertainties of their destination, and the zeal of their leaders dimi-

* Remarks on the Policy of the Allies—Works, vol. vii. p. 124. That the French clearly saw the advantage they had gained, will appear from the manner in which, on the first of August, Barrère reported to the Convention the surrender of the captured towns. After exhorting them to meet their misfortunes with calmness, he said "The events at Mayence restored to us garrisons long practised in the art of warfare. They are a reserve of disciplined soldiers which the tyrants little thought that they were dispatching to La Vendée. Well! we will take care to dispatch them immediately." To accelerate their arrival, three millions (£125,000) would be required; but this would only be a loan to liberty, and would be returned with enormous interest. "Order, then," he said, "that the garrison shall be sent by post conveyance to the forests of La Vendée, and the recapture of Mayence will not be without glory, when La Vendée shall have been destroyed." *Moniteur du 9 Aout, 1793.*

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Preparations
in Flanders.Pichegru
commands the
army of the
north.Force of the
allies.

nished by the knowledge that little was intrusted to their skill, and that their operations might be unsupported by, or even adverse to, the views of the governments under which they served.*

Still, if the events at the close of the last year afforded grounds of satisfaction and triumph, the sentiment sprang rather from evil avoided, than positive advantage acquired. The allies had been baffled in some attempts, and some possessions which they had gained from the republic had been wrested from them; but they retained Condé, Valenciennes, Quesnoi, and many other places, and were, in all points, encamped on the French territory. The struggle which was to take place in Flanders occupied most extensively the expectations, and demanded the exertions, of both parties; to this point a full third part of the mighty force of France was directed. Under the vigilance and judgment of Carnot, their troops were disposed and their generals appointed. Jourdan, although he had been successful in raising the siege of Maubeuge, was superseded in the command of the army of the north by Pichegru, who was transferred from that of the Rhine. With his command, he received no instructions, but an imperative order to conquer, and a direction to attack the allies in the centre, and at the same time to harass their flanks. The system, sagaciously meditated and long successfully pursued, was that of accumulating an overwhelming force on one part of the opposed line; and thus, by gaining local advantage, preventing the union and enfeebling the operations of adversaries scattered on many points, and rendered incapable of united resistance.

To oppose the adverse force, the allies could never reckon on half their number; and even if their ranks could have been filled to that extent, the enthusiastic energy could not have been inspired into the men, nor could the officers, trained in ancient notions of discipline and tactics, and inured to a careful husbandry

* Lacrételle, tome ii. p. 191.

of human life, have competed at once with commanders raised from obscure situations, and who, in the service of an inexorable government, were taught to consider themselves as placed between victory and destruction, and to pursue success, regardless of the sacrifices by which it might be achieved. In the instructions by which the armies were to be governed, there was a striking and effective difference. Carnot, who directed the operations of the French, had skill and judgment sufficient to perceive the difficulties to be surmounted, and to appreciate the advantages to be secured. Acting with the Committee of Public Safety, his plans were uniform, and subject to no other cavil or control: his orders were direct and intelligible, and obedience must be active and implicit, since no want of means was felt, and no restraint imposed, provided energy was displayed and success insured. The allies, on the contrary, acknowledged no supreme command; separate hopes and jealousies, particularly those between Austria and Prussia, made them envious critics of each other's proceedings, and gave them, sometimes, more the appearance of antagonists than of co-operators.

The system to be adopted in the campaign was necessarily referred to different powers. The Duke of York returned to London for instructions, accompanied by Colonel Mack, an officer whom long experience rather than brilliant exploits had elevated into high renown and a great degree of popularity*. At this period, the subsidiary treaty with Prussia was formed; but the manner in which it was discussed, and in which all matters relating to our alliances and the war were treated in Parliament†, had a strong tendency to counteract all our efforts, to afford topics to our enemies, and to impart and confirm distrust and suspicion among our allies.

Plans of campaign.

January.

Efforts of the Emperor.

Sensible that the most strenuous efforts were required to counterbalance the gigantic measures of France, the Aulic Council, at Vienna, issued a decree

* *Homme d'Etat*, vol. ii. p. 473. † Chap. lxxxv.

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Conduct of
Prussia.The Emperor
takes the com-
mand.

for a levy en masse in all the states of the empire: a few readily obeyed; some tendered a slow, languid, and ineffectual compliance, while many others, led by the King of Prussia, resisted the demand; and, instead of the ready submission which misery and the guillotine procured in France, returned, what in France no man would have dared to intimate, cavils, arguments, chicanes, demands, and denials. Among other reasons against the measure, the King of Prussia alleged that to place arms in the hands of so many of their subjects might be more dangerous to the sovereigns themselves than to their enemies; and many appearances indicated a desire in this sovereign to effect a separate peace, if not an alliance, with France*.

In a council, held at Vienna, it was resolved that the Emperor in person should take the command of the troops. It was said that this course was adopted in consequence of a repugnance expressed by the Duke of York to serve as a subordinate to General Clerfaye†. Had such a sentiment existed, it would not have been unreasonable, in a prince so near to the sovereign who was to bring into the field so large a number of his subjects, both British and German, and who by subsidies was to contribute most largely to the services of other powers; but a different cause is assigned.

On both sides, an active and not a defensive campaign was intended; the French force, including the armies of the North, the Rhine, and the Moselle, amounted to five hundred thousand. Their great object was to drive their opponents out of Belgium; and, for this purpose, they also employed, under the command of Pichegru, fifty-four thousand men, in twelve divisions, extending over the whole line from Maubeuge to Dunkirk, exclusive of their new levies, which were employed in the garrisons. The grand Austrian army, of one hundred and forty thousand men, in the plains of Cateau, awaited the personal command of

* See these proceedings fairly and judiciously compressed; *Homme d'Etat*, tom. ii. p. 483 et seqq. Also, *Règne de Frédéric Guillaume*, tom. ii. p. 90, and the collections of *State Papers*.

† *Annual Register*, vol. xxxvi. p. 321.

the Emperor, and there were sixty thousand Austrians on the Rhine; the Prussians amounted to sixty-five thousand; the Duke of York led forty thousand; and, including twelve thousand emigrants, there were thirty-two thousand more, or a total force of three hundred and thirty-seven thousand*.

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To commence the campaign, the arrival of the Emperor was anxiously awaited. He came, accompanied with several of his principal ministers of state, by whose advice he issued, at Brussels, a proclamation against the French system, declaring all persons convicted of any conspiracy or plot tending to introduce, spread, or propagate it, guilty of high treason and punishable with death, while imprisonment was decreed against minor offenders, and clubs and literary societies were put under strict regulation, and rewards promised to those who should assist in bringing criminals to justice. Under the advice of Count Mercy Argenteau, his Imperial Majesty appeared in great state amidst his Flemish subjects. He was received with acclamations of joy, protestations of loyalty, and pre-sages of success, some of which, although warranted by ancient custom, produced, in the present state of Europe, no small portion of ridicule. He next proceeded to view the fortresses of Condé, Valenciennes, and Quesnoi, and to inspect his troops, which, from their splendid appearance and the high state of the cavalry, seemed adequate to any enterprise. But great enterprises were neither within the compass of the Emperor's genius, nor consistent with the plan of operations chalked out by the Aulic Council at Vienna. Obedient to these, instead of directing this gallant force against dispersed bodies of the French, and defeating each of them severally, the siege of Landrecies was to be undertaken, and when its capture should have been effected, the armies were to march against the French capital. After the opportunities which in the two preceding campaigns had been permitted to escape, the project at this period appears ludicrous, or almost

April 4.
The Emperor's
proclamation.

His reception
in Flanders.

* These numbers are taken from Alison, vol. ii. p. 377.

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Movement
of Pichegru.April 20.
Invasion of
West Flanders.

23rd.

Progress of
the campaign.

26th.

29th.

Moucron.
Courtray.30th.
Menin.

insane, and warrants the epigrammatic censure uttered by the French, that the allies were always an idea, a year, and an army behind hand*.

Justly anticipating the plan of the allies, Pichegru collected a large body of troops around Cambray and Guise, for the purpose of assailing the centre of his opponents, near Cateau Cambresis, to drive them from the forest of Mormale, where they had formed impregnable entrenchments, and recapture Quesnoi, the siege of which was commenced. In this quarter, the allied troops formed three divisions, under Prince Cobourg, the Duke of York, and the hereditary Prince of Orange, aided by General Latour; to this division, the siege of Landrecies was confided. Not daring to infringe the orders of the Committee of Public Safety, although convinced of their impracticability, Pichegru collected, in Cæsar's Camp, a force of thirty thousand men, under Souham, and twenty thousand under Moreau, for the purpose of making a detached invasion of West Flanders. General Otto being sent to reconnoitre them, an engagement ensued, in which the French were driven into Cambray, with loss; but the defeat was not of sufficient consequence to prevent them from persevering in their original enterprise.

While the subordinate generals were thus employed, Pichegru, attempting to raise the siege of Landrecies, was defeated, with great loss, both in men and artillery; but, returning to the charge, three days afterward, he assailed an almost impregnable post, at Moucron, retrieved the disaster of the former conflict, and gave fresh animation to his troops. Courtray was taken at the same time; and the next day, Menin, no longer tenable, was evacuated, after a siege of ten days. Landrecies had now surrendered, and Pichegru, convinced of the impracticability of the plan recommended by the Committee of Public Safety, desisted from further attacks on the centre of the allies: he

* Or, Mack s'y prenait un peu trop tard, ce qui inspira à Rivarol, bel esprit célèbre, alors à Bruxelles, ce jeu de mots, si vrai et si piquant : " Les coalisés sont toujours en retard d'une idée, d'une année et d'une armée."—*Homme d'Etat*, tom. ii. p. 479.

would not even attempt the recovery of Landrecies; but, leaving small garrisons in the central fortresses, to prevent surprise, projected a combined movement with the army of the Ardennes, and, taking Beaumont, made some incursions between the Sambre and the Meuse.

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Landrecies.

From the early part of April to the middle of May, all the frontier from Luxembourg to Nieuport was the scene of marches, counter-marches, evolutions, and bloody skirmishes, productive of no serious result. In this period, an attack was made on the Duke of York, near Tournay, in which the French were defeated, with a loss of ten pieces of cannon and four thousand men. General Clerfaye, at the same time, attempted to drive them from Courtray; but a reinforcement was judiciously thrown into the town; and, in an engagement which took place the ensuing day, Clerfaye was driven back into his original position at Thielt.

May 10.
Battle of
Tournay.

Courtray.

11th.

Instructed by the course of events, and illuminated by the genius of Carnot, the Committee of Public Safety, seeing that an effectual blow could best be struck on the Sambre, ordered general Jourdan, who commanded the army of the Moselle, after taking proper measures in the quarter where he then was, to march with forty-five thousand men through the Ardennes, and join the force on the Sambre. The orders were executed, and the united armies were under the tyranny of St. Just and Le Bas, who stimulated the troops to exertion by perpetual threats of execution in case of failure; they had with them an ambulatory guillotine, and it was copiously employed.

The French
cross the
Sambre.

For the preservation of Flanders, Colonel Mack had formed a plan which would occasion the total destruction of Pichegru's army. Nor was the project ill conceived or impracticable. Ninety-five battalions and one hundred and thirty-three squadrons, comprising a force of ninety thousand men, was destined for the service. After many skirmishes, in which Lannoy, Turcoing, Roubaix, Monveaux, and all the great posts in the road from Lisle to Coutray, were taken by the Duke of York, the general attack was made under the eye of the Emperor himself. The intent was to cut off

16th.

Battle of
Turcoing

17th

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18th.

the left wing from the main body of the French army, and force it back upon the sea, where it must have surrendered; but a failure ensued, from the injudicious dispersion of the troops, and their consequent inability to arrive in time at the required positions: it is suggested that invidious party feelings, and a jealousy of Mack, had their share in producing this disaster*.

Early in the ensuing morning, the republicans, in great force, attacked the post at Turcoing; two battalions, detached by the Duke of York to make a diversion, failed in returning to him, and thus left an opening on his right. The French, pouring in torrents of troops on every side, had completely surrounded the British battalions; they fought with their never-failing bravery, but were at length completely routed, and fled so suddenly, that the Duke of York, as he candidly stated, owed his safety to the fleetness of his horse. The French took fifteen hundred prisoners, and sixty pieces of cannon; but it is on the other hand asserted, that they left on the field four thousand slain, while the allies lost only three thousand.

22nd.
Battle of
Pont-Achin.

In estimating the consequences of this day, the opposing generals widely differed: the Duke of York, in his public orders, declared he had little to regret beside the loss of so many brave men; while Pichegru, believing the allies to be destitute of artillery, made a general attack on their right wing, with a hundred thousand men, intending to force the passage of the Scheldt, and invest Tournay. The action began at five o'clock in the morning, and the French, continually bringing up fresh troops, continued it the whole day; about three o'clock in the afternoon, the right wing of the allies, being greatly fatigued, began to give ground; but the Duke of York detached seven Austrian battalions and the second brigade of British infantry to their support. The spirit and perseverance of the English soldiers decided the conflict: they stormed the village of Pont-Achin, rushed with fixed bayonets into the heart of the French army, threw them into confusion, and they could not be rallied. The allies lay on

* Homme d'Etat, tome ii. p. 533.

their arms that night, expecting a renewed attack in the morning; but the French retreated to Lisle. Such a battle has seldom been fought; the republicans were in action under an incessant fire of cannon and musketry upwards of twelve hours: twelve thousand of their men were left dead, and five hundred taken prisoners: the loss of the allies was estimated at four thousand.

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The spirited conduct of the British troops on all these occasions rendered them at once the admiration of the allies, and terror of the French. Their heroic valour, which ought to have gained them respect, kindled the fury of the republican government; and the Convention was base enough, on the report of a pretended attempt to murder Robespierre, to concur in a proposition, made by the Committee of Public Safety, decreeing that, in future, no quarter should be given to British or Hanoverian troops. This savage edict was recommended to the army by an address, the production of Barrère: some of the troops expressed detestation, and some generals resisted the observance of the odious law; but others were found ready to execute it: some Hanoverian prisoners were shot; and a republican general, to stimulate his troops by his example, put one to death by his own hand*.

26th.
Savage decree
of the Con-
vention.

The Duke of York issued general orders to his troops, conceived in moderate and manly terms, befitting a soldier, whose profession was disgraced by such an attempt to abolish the laws of humanity, and the guardian of the subjects of his august father, who were thus invidiously singled out, as people to whom alone the ordinary regulations of civilised nations ought not to be extended.

January 9.
General orders
of the Duke of
York.

When this paper became known in France, Robespierre, at the Jacobin club, discharged upon it, upon its royal author and his nation, all the abuse and calumny that rancour and malignity could supply. "His Royal Highness," he said, "reminds the British and Hanoverian troops, that clemency is the

14th.
Robespierre's
observations.

* History of the Campaigns of General Pichegru, by David, p. 56, English translation.

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“ brightest gem in the character of a soldier ; on this
“ head he refers to the example of former periods ;
“ but what similitude is there between circumstances
“ as they were formerly, and as they are at present ?
“ What is there in common between liberty and des-
“ potism, between virtue and vice ? That soldiers
“ fighting for despots should give their hands to con-
“ quered soldiers to return together to the hospital,
“ can easily be conceived ; that a slave should hold
“ intercourse with a slave, a tyrant with a tyrant, can
“ also easily be conceived ; but that a freeman should
“ make any compromise with a tyrant or his satellite,
“ valour with pusillanimity, virtue with vice, is what
“ cannot be conceived, and is in its own nature im-
“ possible*.”

May 20.
Progress of
the French.

24th.

In the mean time the French army had repassed the Sambre, recaptured Fontaine l'Evêque and Binch, and partially invested Charleroi ; they were routed by General Count Kaunitz, with the loss of five thousand men killed, wounded, and prisoners, and fifty pieces of cannon ; but this disaster was compensated on another side, where the portion of the force under Jourdan, which now received the name of the army of the Sambre and Meuse, invaded the Duchy of Luxembourg, took possession of Arlon, and obliged Beaulieu to fall back on Marche, in order to cover Namur. The Duke of York's position at Tournay was thus rendered, for several days, very precarious ; but St. Just and Le Bas having compelled the troops to cross the Sambre and commence a blockade of Charleroi, they were again repulsed, and forced back to their former position.

June 3.
defeated at
Charleroi.

State of
Flanders.

26th.

The Emperor now found that the loyalty of his Flemish subjects was dependent on the success of his arms. The principality of Liege had shewn such marks of favour to the republican cause, that a proclamation was judged necessary, by which the place was put under the military command of the Prince of Wirtemberg ; and another, enjoining all gun-smiths and

* See the three papers in the Annual Register, vol. xxxvi. p. 391.

other persons to deposit their arms and ammunition in the town-house. The progress of the French increased the spirit of disaffection; and when they had been greatly reinforced, all communication from Brussels cut off, and the investment of Charleroi and Ypres was menaced, the malcontents at Brussels publicly avowed themselves, and planted the tree of liberty. The Emperor quitted the army, and returned to Vienna, issuing, in his retreat, some commands and proclamations, which met no attention.

Ypres, the key of West Flanders, was blockaded by thirty thousand French, who had also a covering army of twenty-five thousand. Clerfaye, with an inadequate force, made many brave attempts to arrest their progress; but, overpowered by numbers, was obliged to fall back to Thielt, while General Hamilton retreated to Bruges; and, Clerfaye being driven to Ghent, all communication with Oudenard was cut off. Ypres surrendered; General Walmoden found himself no longer able to retain Bruges; and the Duke of York, evacuating Tournay, retired to Renaix, hoping to support Oudenard, which the French had summoned.

Meanwhile, the army of the Sambre and Meuse, joined with that of the north, having taken Dinan, again crossed the river, in the face of the Austrians, and began to reconstruct the works for prosecuting the siege: they were again defeated, and driven beyond the Sambre; but in two days Pichegru resumed his station, confident in superior forces. The Prince of Cobourg abandoned Tournay, leaving the defence of the Scheldt to the Duke of York, and withdrawing all his posts from before Valenciennes, Quesnoi, and the other French towns in his possession, to succour West Flanders. For this purpose, after two days spent in preparation, he made a general attack on the posts of the enemy; and, after a very long and severe action, the allies were defeated at every point, and forced to retreat to Halle, thirty miles from the field of battle. This decisive engagement was fought on the plains of Fleurus, and confirmed the fate of Flanders.

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June 5.
Ypres and
other towns
taken.

7th.

13th

17th.

24th.

June 3.

12th.

16th.

Battle of
Fleurus.
26th.

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June 26.
Arrival of
Lord Moira.1st to 9th July.
Success of the
French.11th to 27th
July.

Charleroi had surrendered the preceding day; and the Prince of Cobourg was compelled, on the approach of the republicans, to retreat from Halle, leaving Brussels to its fate; the allied forces being reduced to eighty thousand men, while those of the republicans were more than three hundred thousand.

About the same period, the Earl of Moira, who arrived at Ostend with seven thousand men, seeing the desperate state of affairs, pressed forward to join the Duke of York. The junction was not effected for several days, during which the French took possession of Ostend, and marched toward Ghent: the Prince of Cobourg being again defeated, they gained Mons; the Duke of York was obliged to retreat from Renaix to Gramont, while the French rendered themselves masters of Ghent, Oudenard, and Tournay. The plunder to which they addicted themselves was unrestrained by principle or shame; "the representatives on mission, the commercial agents*, and the army commissaries, ruined the unhappy country of Belgium for a long period. Such was their rapacity, that lace, and articles of a like nature, were put in requisition, under pretence of supplying the wants of the troops†." After a series of skirmishes, they possessed themselves of Brussels, and halted in positions reaching from Liege to Antwerp; while the Austrians defended the banks of the Meuse from Ruremonde to Maestricht: the troops of England and Holland, having retired beyond Breda, were encamped at Osterwist, and a corps was posted at Ludhoven to keep open the communication between the armies. Malines, Lecwain, Judoigne, Namur, Antwerp, Tongres, Liege, St. Amand, Marchiennes, Cateau, and other places, had already been evacuated; and Condé, Valenciennes, Quesnoi, and Landrecies, abandoned to their own strength, were invested by the republicans‡.

* These were moneyed men who attended the French armies, advancing cash for occasional equipments, on condition of being repaid out of the spoils and plunder of places where the French were successful.

† Copied from Pichegru's Campaigns, p. 46

‡ Besides the Annual Registers, Gazettes, and Moniteurs, the narrative of these events is taken from David's History of the Campaigns of Pichegru, Captain L. T. Jones's Historical Journal, Thiers, Lacrételle, and many other authorities.

Fortune was equally favourable to them on the Rhine. Spiers and Kaisers Lautern were speedily captured: the Duke of Brunswick resigned the command; and, soon afterward, Fort Vauban was evacuated, after an ineffectual attempt to blow it up by springing mines. Several skirmishes occurred, but no action of importance, until the King of Prussia had consented to continue the alliance; then Marshal Moellendorff, who succeeded the Duke of Brunswick, surprised the French in their intrenchments at Kaisers Lautern, put them to the rout, with great slaughter, and captured many prisoners, with some artillery. No attempt was made subsequent to this successful exploit; the month of June passed in skirmishes; but, early in July, the French, having by great reinforcements acquired a superiority in numbers, attacked the allies at Edikhoffen, and, after an obstinate contest, which lasted four days, drove the Austrians across the Rhine, and compelled the Prussians to fall back towards Mentz. This action determined the fate of the campaign in that quarter, as the allies evacuated twenty leagues of the French territory, and enabled the republicans to invade the electorate of Treves*.

From these scenes, in which, if human blood was shed with profusion, the received notions of military glory reconcile us to events not unusual, and to acts which, even when carried to excess, were palliated by some causes of excitement, or some ideas, however erroneous, of national safety or of offended honour, attention is now called to the interior of France, where instances of savage ferocity and of implacable, cold-blooded vengeance were displayed, such as no apprehension for social safety appeared to warrant, and no record of antecedent history could parallel. Tyrants in former times had exercised dominion, and shewn the baseness of their nature in wild, sanguinary and unjustifiable acts of cruelty. Politics and religion had armed their devotees against their opponents; massacres had been executed; faggots had blazed; and un-

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Campaign on
the Rhine.

24th May.

Interior of
France.

Reign of
Terror.

* Précis Historique, p. 377; Lacrételle, tome xi. p. 207; Thiers; the Annual Registers; Victoires et Conquêtes; and other compilations.

just sentences, under the absurd sanction of law, had sent unoffending and virtuous persons to the scaffold: but never before had there been seen, in an enlightened and civilized community, a system established and avowed by which unlimited bloodshed was recognized as the principle, the aim, and the end of government; in which to kill, and not to spare, was deemed the height of virtue and of sound policy*. Such was the inevitable progress of the French revolution: it began in blood; in its progress every step was marked with blood; the desire of plunder and the thirst of vengeance led to acts of extermination: first individuals, then classes, were designated to slaughter; rank, religion, political opinion, were marked out and pursued with unrelenting malignity; the fourteenth of July led to the tenth of August, the sixth of October, and the second of September; to the establishment of the reign of terror, and its great instrument, the Revolutionary Tribunal; and such an exertion of perverted law as permitted an avowal of a distinct determination to extend the effect of definitions so as to involve persons who never thought of offence in some description of criminals, and, under favour of such inculpations, without proof and without defence, daily to stain the streets of towns with the blood effused on scaffolds, or, in the less discriminating destruction of the musket, the cannon, and the ocean, to glut the rage of vengeance and accelerate the course of destruction. That a vast population should, for a long time, submit to such a tyranny, exercised by a small body, strong only in the abjectness of their victims, is among the wonders which history has to record; and it adds to the wonder, to reflect that the emancipation of a nation so formidable in arms, so prodigal in self compliment, should at last be effected, not by any well-formed combination of courage, integrity, and talent, not by any individual act of heroic virtue and self-devotion, but simply by the quarrels of their assassins, their mutual distrust and hatred, the meanness of their sentiments, and the wickedness of their plots; but the crisis was now arrived, and its develop-

* The phrase used in the Convention was, "Terror is the order of the day."

ment forms a remarkable era in the history of France and of Europe.

After the execution of Brissot and his confederates, and the expulsion or imprisonment of the seventy-two members who protested in their favour, the Convention was reduced to a state of inconceivable insignificance ; to listen to the reports of Barrère or the speeches of some tolerated orators, to record, without discussion or dissent, such decrees as, under the sanction of the Committee of Public Safety, were proposed to them ; to listen, with approbation, to narratives of cruel extermination, transmitted in language too vulgar and obscene to allow of transcription even for a specimen, and to receive deputations sent to express sentiments of cruelty or blasphemy, formed their general occupation ; and thus, while they flattered themselves with words becoming the mouths of heroes and philosophers, they recorded themselves to all posterity as the most disgraced collection of heartless slaves that ever assembled, under the appearance of freedom, to rule the fate of a nation. With the semblance of authority, of legislation, and of the delegated power of an entire people, they shewed themselves the trembling slaves of the Commune of Paris and of the Jacobin Club. The party called the Mountain domineered in the Convention, and members of their faction were employed as missionaries or pro-consuls, to execute, and generally to exceed, in the departments, the bloody instructions imparted to them by the Committee of Public Safety ; nor did the Mountain feel any fear of being enfeebled by their absence ; the few timid, inconsistent, and despised adherents of the Gironde, who occupied the division called the Plain, were happy to creep on in insignificant obscurity, if so they could escape the perils which would await any display of opinion or effort at power.

After some changes, Robespierre, Billaud Varennes, Couthon, St. Just, and Collot d'Herbois, formed the Committee of Public Safety : all these were men of unrivalled ferocity ; and those who composed the other ruling committee, that of General Safety, were in all

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State of the
Convention.

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neral Safety.

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respects disposed and qualified to forward their system of destruction. Volumes have been filled with narratives of the cruel waste of human blood in Paris, where the numbers executed are carried to three thousand in one year; in Lyons, Marseilles, Toulon, and throughout the district of La Vendée, where the axe of the executioner was aided by the engines of war and the calamities of shipwreck, and where not man alone, but the works of art and the monuments of glory, afforded gratification to the passion for destruction; with descriptions of the miseries and indignities sustained in the prisons, with affecting displays of virtuous innocence, in every period of life, tendering vain supplications for mercy, or displaying almost superhuman fortitude in solacing or sharing the calamities they could not avert, and of the barbarous pleasantries, the insulting jibes, the vulgar ribaldries with which the salaried murderers, miscalled judges, excluded defences, perverted juries, and stained with uncounted victims the altar of republican cruelty. In Paris, the seat of the legislature, the pretended asylum of philosophy and the fine arts, these scenes were daily displayed, and every day the shades of horror were growing more and more deep. Public mansions, monasteries, sumptuous hotels, and colleges, were converted into prisons, which were so regurgitating, that the execution of fourscore persons in a single day did not seem to afford a sufficient vent; the streets were stained, and the water of the Seine discoloured, with the blood which was shed; but yet contrivances were said to be in progress for a more rapid destruction, by an improvement in the engine of execution, by fire, by gunpowder, or by poison*.

It is stated, by a French historian, that in compensation for the five prisoners released from the Bastille

* See, on this subject, a collection of tracts, published in four volumes, called *Tableau des Prisons sous Robespierre*. Of these, some are anonymous, some avowed, particularly a number of facts collected by Réal, and *Mémoires d'un Detenu*, par Honoré Riouffe. *Erreurs, &c. de la Revolution* par Prud'homme. *Biographical Memoirs of the French Revolution*, art. Benoit, v. i. p. 182 and 189. art. Robespierre, vol. ii. p. 420. The histories, journals, and memoirs of the time in general; and, for able summaries of the whole matter, see Lacrételle, tom. xi. p. 312. Thiers, tom. vi. c. 6; and extracts from Toulangeon and Desadoards in the *Lectures of Professor Smythe on the French Revolution*, vol. iii. p. 108.

on the fourteenth of July, the republic, between November, 1793, and the following July, had imprisoned two hundred thousand persons as suspected, or in other words doomed to death*. Was there any thing in the state of the country which justified, or in any degree excused, these atrocious and appalling proceedings? Absolutely nothing. Military events had extinguished all apprehensions from foreign force, and reduced the menaces of the allies to matter of ridicule instead of alarm. In the interior, the successes of the republicans had quelled all apprehensions from the partisans of religion, royalty, or the Gironde. The power of government over persons and property, over talent and labour, was unlimited, and unresisted, and the proof of its extent, and the apparent surety of its duration, was in that abject tameness with which the whole community prostrated themselves at the feet of their tyrants. Parents, unresisting, though not unrepining, saw their sons, at an immature age, forcibly snatched from their homes and separated from their studies and pursuits, to swell the ranks of the army, or to fill up the crowds in the prisons, while the youth of the land, not daring to raise the arm, or even the voice, of resistance, submitted to such commands, and left their parents and relatives unprotected and void of consolation, that they themselves might escape, in the camp, that danger and persecution to which they left their parents and their relatives exposed in the towns and in the country.

But the end of this horrible system was approaching. The dominant faction was divided into three parties. The lowest and most violent of the Jacobins, or, more properly, the Cordeliers, headed by Hébert, Chaumette, Cloutz, and other mean and blood-thirsty Frenchmen and foreigners, were desirous to perpetuate and to augment the cruelties in which they found their highest gratification; while Danton, Camille Desmoulins, and some others, stimulated, perhaps, by sentiments, too long suppressed, of humanity, began to show themselves advocates of mercy; Robespierre more in-

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State of
parties.

Hébert.

Danton.

Robespierre.

* Lacrételle, tome xi. p. 312.

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Hébert com-
mences hostili-
ties.

directly and cautiously avowed similar opinions, and even intimated the necessity of re-establishing such a profession of religion as might rescue the country from the scandal and scourge of atheism.

The contest which ensued was not founded on the necessity of reform for the public good, but was a struggle for supremacy among ambitious leaders. Hébert, aiming at supremacy, through the influence of the commune, in which he had the office of procureur-général, made himself conspicuous in displays of atheism, in threats against the persons imprisoned, and, at length, in his journal called *Père Duchêne*, proceeded to the dangerous extreme of exposing the peculations, the vices, and the crimes of the enriched deputies; he made a direct charge against Lacroix, indirectly designated Danton, glanced at Robespierre, accused Barrère at the Jacobins, and, at the Cordeliers, proposed to throw a veil of crape over the Rights of Man. This attack drew down speedy vengeance; the more eloquent pen of Camille Desmoulins was successfully employed in opposition to the coarse and barbarous ribaldry of Hébert; Robespierre stood aloof in the contest, rejoicing to see that by attacking each other, the factions of Hébert and of Danton would place themselves equally in his power; but his inclinations and feelings were sufficiently expressed to excite the apprehensions of the delinquents. Their terror was proportioned to their danger; but their baseness of character rendered them ridiculous, no less than odious. Every night, at their meetings, when they had derived from intemperance a semblance of courage, they denounced their enemies, excited each other to murder, and distributed daggers among themselves. The morrow was always fixed for their insurrection; but the morrow found them reduced, by the evaporation of the wine they had imbibed, to their natural state of cowardly inertness, incapable of action during the day, but proud and boastful when again inflamed with liquor at night. Hébert was conspicuous in this display of abjectness; Ronsin, who had formed a nucleus, and obtained a command in a force recently established

called the revolutionary army, displayed more bravery; by his advice an attempt was made to raise the people of Paris against the Committee of Public Safety; but it failed, as the section of Marat alone declared itself in a state of insurrection. A decree was obtained for the arrest of Hébert, Ronsin, Chaumette (who styled himself Anaxagoras), Clootz, Momoro (the husband of the goddess of reason), and fourteen of their adherents, and, to the great joy of the prisoners, of whom so many owed their incarceration to their iniquitous denunciations, they were brought, bound hand and foot, and safely lodged in the cells of the Conciergerie. With them, as with so many others, the space was short between the steps of the prison and the scaffold of the guillotine. The act of accusation against them, framed as if on purpose to burlesque their own absurd charges against others, comprised crimes of all sorts and descriptions, a conspiracy with Pitt and Cobourg to enslave and ruin France; assailing the individuality of the French, by declaiming for an universal republic; delivering themselves up to an obscene voracity; and (to the great indignation of Ronsin) petty thefts, so low as shirts and pocket handkerchiefs. Commensurate with the absurdity of the charge was the iniquity of the trial. Judges, jurors, and the public accuser, who had all within a few days bowed before them as their undisputed masters, now triumphed over and insulted them with all the insolence of plebeian malignity. Hébert, weeping, fainting, and almost insane with fear, attempted no defence; Ronsin and some others, who made efforts to speak, were cut short with an expression formerly suggested by Hébert himself, denying that it was their turn*. Prepared by Camille Desmoulins, the mob pursued them to the place of execution, mixing with their execrations, ribaldries and obscenities derived from the columns of *Le Père Duchèsne*. Unhonoured, unpitied, and unlamented, they submitted to the hand of their old friend the executioner; the people of Paris regained, by their fall,

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1794.

March 16.
Fall of him
and his party.

24th.

* "Tu n'as pas la parole" were the words used, and the description was "leur couper la parole."

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LXXXVI.

1794.

Fall of Danton
and his party.

April 3.

the privilege of washing their faces and putting on clean linen; and the revolutionary army was disbanded.

Short was the triumph enjoyed by Desmoulins and his friends in the overthrow of the Cordeliers: by the removal of Hébert, Danton was placed in direct opposition to Robespierre, as an aspirant to supremacy in the state; and it soon became obvious that both could not continue the conflict; one must destroy the other. In his journal, called *Le vieux Cordelier*, Camille attacked the cruelty of the existing system, in a manner most congenial to the French taste, and most irritating to his opponents, by citations and parodies of Tacitus and Suetonius, and application to modern times of the transactions, passions, and persons referred to in ancient history. The speeches of Danton and his private consultations pointed to a relaxation of the system of terror, and a change in the mode of government; but their party wanted the activity and energy necessary to success. Robespierre, on the contrary, made prudence serve instead of personal courage; he diminished the strength of his adversaries, by forming a new commune entirely of his own creation; and, in ten days after the fall of Hébert, Danton, Lacroix, Camille Desmoulins, Héroult de Sechelles, Chabot, Basire, Fabre d'Eglantines, and some others, were taken into custody. Such an event could not be viewed without emotion; strong measures were expected in the Convention; amidst whispers of alarm, and interrogations of doubt against whom measures of persecution would next be extended, Legendre rose to move that the imprisoned deputies should be heard at the bar. In the course of his speech, he named Danton and several others, recapitulating their merits and services in the cause of the republic, when Robespierre and the rest of the Committee of Public Safety entered; Legendre paused: "Proceed," said Robespierre, in a calm but freezing tone peculiar to himself; "we shall soon discover, perhaps, what enemies of liberty have yet escaped our vigilance. Legendre pretends ignorance of that which is known to the whole Convention; the

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“ names of the persons arrested. He knows that his friend Lacroix is one, and does not name him, because to defend him exceeds the scope of human impudence ; he expatiates on Danton, considering him a privileged person ; but let him understand that we acknowledge no privileged persons ;” and adduced many instances in which he had given up his own personal friends, such as Pétion and Roland, when convinced that they were false to the Republic. The prepared tribunes hailed this effusion with clamorous applause ; Legendre, sensible of the application of many of the remarks, sat down, appalled ; and St. Just presented the report of the Committee. A very superior talent, it is observed, was requisite to combine, as he did, ideas the most contradictory, to associate facts the most opposite, and to amalgamate actions the most discordant ; his speech was a master-piece of mendacity, paradox, and imposture ; it is, perhaps, in profound villany the most accomplished production of the human mind. Great orator as he was, had Cataline undertaken to accuse Cicero before the Roman senate, he could not have soared to so sublime an elevation. Danton, whose arm had shaken the throne of Louis, was termed a royalist ; Danton, so distinguished an enemy of the Gironde, was accused of federalism ; nay, he was charged with being the accomplice of those very prisoners whose ruthless murder, in September 1792, had been perpetrated under his direction. Camille Desmoulins had been one of the earliest instigators of the revolution, but was now charged as a royalist ; he had written a pamphlet to shew the sordid motives and treacherous conspiracies of the Brissotines ; sentences were selected as proving that he had not only known, but participated in, their delinquencies ; that he had intrigued with the Duke of Orléans, plotted with Brissot, and travelled in strict intimacy with Madame de Genlis ; even his late publications against the Hébert party were the foundation of charges against him as one of their accomplices.

On accusations so framed, the culprits were brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal. They had too long

5th.

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LXXXVI.

1794.

6th.

Position of
Robespierre.

impelled, and too well knew, the proceedings of that bloody court, to suppose that sentence of death was not certain, even before the trial had commenced; but they were anxious so to defend themselves, that the people should see their real situation, and terror and alarm be planted in the bosoms of their destroyers. For this undertaking, Danton was eminently qualified; his popularity was not destroyed; his courage was unflinching, and the thunder of his voice would be heard, in spite of interruption or clamour. In vain did the President tell him he was out of order, in vain ring his bell as a sign that silence was required; the intrepid prisoner persevered, until, on a representation of the facts, the Convention decreed at once, that every person accused before the Revolutionary Tribunal, who should insult or resist the national justice, should be put out of court, and condemned immediately. This decree was transmitted to the tribunal, at a moment when the prisoners had retired for repose or refreshment; on their return, they were informed of its purport, declared guilty, and executed the same evening. They were not, like Hébert, pursued to the scaffold with insults and execrations; but no feeling of compassion attended them; their fate excited the gloomy malignity, the offspring of selfish terror, which menaced the safety of their oppressors, and warranted Danton's apostrophe, "Take care of yourself, Robespierre; for when I descend into the grave, I drag you after me."

Delivered thus from his most influential rivals, supported by apparently warm and devoted friends, carried on a tide of popularity rising almost to idolatry, it would seem that the attainment of supreme power was within the certain and easy reach of the great demagogue; but this result was opposed by his own temper and character. His views with respect to power and rule were not distinct or defined; his unconfiding and jealous disposition prevented him from having many truly cordial and zealous adherents; and, above all, he wanted that personal courage, that intrepid assurance, which contributes so largely to the success of great enterprizes.

He had now the opportunity of establishing his authority on the love and gratitude of a nation emancipated from an odious, bloody, and disgraceful thralldom ; but, after the fall of his mightiest foes, the course of cruelty was never intermitted. Not to mention the departments, Paris presented its unmitigated horrors ; the prisons were crowded, the prisoners exposed to insult, privation, and cruelty as before ; the Revolutionary Tribunal was no less expeditious, obdurate, and unsparing, than it had been ; and the sacrifices on the guillotine rather increased than diminished in number, while the victims were of both sexes, of every age, and of all descriptions in society. Thus, one day witnessed the execution of the brutal Chaumette and the infamous apostate Gobet ; but, at the same time, two amiable young women, guilty in nothing but their attachment to two worthless husbands, the widows of Hébert and Camille Desmoulins, were subjected to the stroke of fate. Another day produced the slaughter of the members of the late Parliament of Paris ; Lavoisier, the celebrated chymist, was sent to execution ; his petition for a few days' respite, that he might complete some experiments, being repelled with the brutal answer, " the republic does not want any men of learning or chymists." If youth, beauty, or knowledge could not inspire compassion, age was not more respected. The venerable and intrepid Malesherbes, whose only crime was his heroic defence of his unhappy sovereign, was dragged from his retreat in the country, and, with three generations of his family, inhumanly slaughtered, at an age approaching ninety.

To conclude this afflictive and disgusting recital, the Princess Elizabeth, sister of the murdered King, whose life had ever been marked by the purest virtue and the most extensive benevolence, and who had never been suspected of interfering in public affairs, was selected as a victim to the insatiable appetite of the French people for the blood of all who were of distinguished birth or character. While immured in the Conciergerie with her nephew, she was careful in imparting to him sentiments of religion, humanity,

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1794.
Continuance
of cruelty.

14th.

21st.

May 9.

Murder of
the Princess
Elizabeth.

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1794.

May 10-11.

and forgiveness, and treated him with so much respect, that the commissioners on duty thought it necessary to reprehend her, and finally to remove the children to separate apartments. The Princess was compelled to perform the most menial offices herself. She dressed the scanty meal allowed her, and swept the floor of her prison with her own hands. Two days after Robespierre had denounced the conspiracy of the Cordeliers, a deputation from the section of the Pantheon, tutored for the purpose, attended at the bar of the Convention, and required that "the impure remains of the family who butchered the people on the 10th of August, should fall under the avenging and protecting sword of the law." An act of accusation, replete with falsities and absurdities, was framed against her, and an interrogatory was contrived for the purpose of extracting from her answers some pretext for her condemnation. She was asked whether she had not comforted her nephew with the hopes of succeeding to his father's throne? She answered, "I have conversed familiarly with that unfortunate child, who has more than one claim to my affection; and I gave him all those consolations which appeared to me likely to reconcile him to the loss of those who had given him birth." This answer was construed as an acknowledgment of a plot "to build up the wrecks of a subverted throne, by deluging it with the blood of the patriots." On this observation, without hearing a single witness, the Princess was condemned. Four-and-twenty persons were tried at the same time, condemned for the same conspiracy, and guillotined the same day; the Princess was executed last. Her conduct on her trial, and till the moment of her death, was calculated to prove, before a tribunal of atheists, the firmness and composure which religion can communicate to a mind naturally timid.

Madame
Du Barry.

The same feeling which caused this murder produced that of the Countess Du Barry, the distinguished mistress of Louis the Fifteenth. She was not so deeply plunged in vice as other mistresses of aged and depraved monarchs have been; but in her death, not less

than her life, she formed a striking contrast to the Princess Elizabeth, who suffered with the patience and resigned piety of a saint and a martyr: Madame Du Barry disgraced her last moment by the shrieks, the struggles, and the impotent violence of a woman whose only joy and desire were fixed in this world, and who had no prospect or hope beyond it.

While thus extending the system of terror, Robespierre was constantly engaged in promoting his own views of supreme power; the authorities of government were distributed among twelve committees entirely devoted to him; he established a secret police, which was profusely paid, and exercised the office of spies in every meeting, institution, and family; he was always attended with a secret guard to protect him against those sudden dangers of which he could not be apprised by his spies; in public, numerous adherents, armed with heavy sticks, were at hand to repel any immediate assaults, and, as if anxious to form a body guard of youthful protectors, attached to his cause and to his person, he collected, under pretext of relieving patriotic families, three thousand* young men, aged from fifteen to eighteen; they wore a fantastic uniform, of classical design, were well armed and disciplined, inflamed with the highest opinions of the virtue and patriotism of Robespierre: the place of their encampment was the Plaine de Grenelle, near Paris, and they were called *élèves de l'école de Mars*.

These were among the means by which Robespierre hoped to gain and to secure, as the fruit of his widely extended popularity, the permanent possession of supreme power, under the name of president, protector, dictator, or some other, unknown and undefined. His contrivances display art without wisdom; daring unsupported by valour or magnanimity. Instead of advancing with the manly step of a successful soldier, his was the insidious motion of a cautious pettifogger. He had not the courage to dissolve or purify the Convention; but by his efforts to render the members

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LXXXVI.

1791.

Measures of
Robespierre.

* *Laerételle*, tome xii. p. 67; *La Vallée*, tome ii p. 176, makes their number six thousand.

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1794.

Acknowledg-
ment of a Su-
preme Being.

unresisting victims to his bloody tribunal, he created alarm, jealousy, and deadly opposition.

While these sentiments were gaining ground, he attempted a new project to gain popularity, by rescuing his country from the well-deserved imputation of atheism. His efforts, so far as the mere acknowledgment of a Supreme Being, without reverence for his revealed will, or provision for his worship, were probably sincere, as they were consistent with his antecedent conduct. In a speech at the Jacobin club, made before the arrest of Hébert and his party, he had observed that atheism was aristocratical, and the idea of a great Being, who watched over oppressed innocence and punished successful crime, was altogether popular. "Did no God exist," he added, "we ought to invent one*" The aspect of public opinion was favourable to his bounded views. The Cordeliers and other furious societies were all abolished; the Jacobins, with their affiliated bodies, alone remained, and the Committee of Public Safety had declared that integrity, justice, and all the virtues, were the order of the day.

May 7.
Report to the
Convention.

Under these circumstances, Robespierre appeared in the Convention as the reporter from the Committee of Public Safety, on the subject of morality and religion. His speech, carefully prepared, was a mixture of puerile truisms and argumentative absurdities; and he described priests as being to morality what empirics are to medicine. In conclusion, a decree was obtained, declaring that the French people acknowledged a Supreme Being and the immortality of the soul, and that the most worthy worship was the practice of our duties toward man. Fêtes were to be instituted on every decade, or tenth day, to recall man to the contemplation of the Divinity, and of the dignity of his own being; their names were to be derived from the most useful of the social virtues; and there were to be separate commemorations of the great days of the revolution†. In a month, a festival was to be celebrated in honour of the Supremé Being, at which the

Festivals
decreed.

* Thiers, tome vi. p. 15.

† The 14th July, the 10th August, the 21st of January, and the 31st of May.

Convention, the constituted authorities, and the whole population of Paris, were to attend, and the arrangement was confided to David.

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Nothing could exceed the satisfaction with which the new proposal was received; Robespierre's speech was rapturously applauded, printed, and profusely distributed; the Jacobins came to the bar of the Convention to acknowledge their gratitude, and promise their presence at the fête; the inscription "to reason," was effaced from the churches, and "to the Supreme Being" substituted; "Vive L'Eternel" became a popular cry, and there was every reason to expect that the festival would be as numerous attended as that to the goddess of reason in the preceding autumn.

Popularity of
these proceedings.

To the day of this celebration, Robespierre is said to have looked forward for the consummation of his ambitious designs. To appear as the visible head of the transaction, he had caused himself to be appointed President of the Convention, and prepared his speech even with greater care than on the former occasion. At eight in the morning, the garden of the Tuileries was filled with an anxious crowd, who displayed the unusual appearance of elegance in dress, and thus proclaimed their emancipation from the filthy domination of the Cordeliers. Robespierre had repaired to the palace at an early hour, and, in an upper apartment of the pavilion de Flore, breakfasted in company with a few of his intimate and most confidential friends. The Convention had assembled in a large temporary building, opposite the central pavilion of the palace, and toward noon sent to apprise him that he was expected. To the surprise and indignation of many, he kept them waiting a considerable time; and, then advancing to an exalted place in the building, pronounced his prepared oration. When this was finished, the members of the Convention, two by two, marched to the Champ de Mars. In this progress, too, Robespierre shewed an indiscreet arrogance and presumption, by separating himself from the main body, and affecting distinction by marching alone, at the head, and at a considerable distance from them. The ceremony was one of bur-

June 8.
Celebration
in Paris.

Conduct of
Robespierre.

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1794.

His disap-
pointment.

lesque grandeur; three images, representing atheism, discord, and selfishness, were set on fire; wisdom issued from their ashes, but it was remarked that she was tinged with the smoke that had been created; children, crowned with violets, chanted patriotic hymns; young men, crowned with oak, swore before their seniors, who wore garlands of vine and olive, to defend their country. They returned to the garden of the Tuileries, and the follies of the day were terminated by shews and dances, in which the gaiety of the French character was displayed in its full effect.

In the course of this day, the countenance of Robespierre evinced the changing sensations of his mind. He came from the pavilion of Flora, radiating with confidence and joy, as expecting an event which was to crown all his wishes. In the progress of his speech in the garden, he found his hopes unaccomplished; his appearance shewed the gloom of disappointment, and he marched at the head of his colleagues, in a state of sullen dissatisfaction; but at the close of the ceremony his countenance was marked by the ferocious passions which agitated his soul, and portended revenge and destruction. An author, who had good means of knowing his manœuvres, and had been employed in executing some of them, explains these phenomena by stating that a gang had been hired to raise in the garden, at proper points in his speech, the words, "Vive Robespierre! Vive le Dictateur!" trusting that the herd who attended the ceremony would have repeated the cry; that, spreading from mouth to mouth, it would have become general in Paris; and that this revolution, like so many others, would have passed as the spontaneous suffrage of the people. Unfortunately, the reward of their exertion was paid in advance; while Robespierre was enjoying his sumptuous regale, these men, in the humbler recesses of the tavern, were spending the money they had received; and when their clamour was anxiously expected by the orator, nothing saluted his ear but the ordinary applause bestowed on well-turned periods or flashy sentiments. Had these hirelings recovered from the effect of their potations,

and made the attempt in the Champ de Mars, it would have been in vain, the effect would have been destroyed by the dispersion of groupes in that more ample space, and by the impossibility of uniting, at a moment, in the same exclamation, an assemblage of between three and four hundred thousand people, pursuing various pleasures, and inspired with no general sentiment*. In the course of the day, several pointed sayings increased Robespierre's ill-humour, by shewing that his projects were not unknown, and menacing him with their consequences. The word tyrant and the name of Brutus reached his ears from various quarters; Bourdon de l'Oise reminded him of Mirabeau's observation, how near the Tarpeian rock was to the Capitol; and when, in the course of his speech, he presumptuously said that the Great Being had planted in the heart of the oppressor remorse and fear, a powerful voice from among the members of the Convention answered, "That is very true, Robespierre†."

In the great qualities necessary to the accomplishment of the mighty enterprize he contemplated, this pretender was utterly deficient. His eloquence, ornate, pointed, and seductive, had not the inspiration which impels to high resolves and heroic achievements; he neither possessed, nor seems to have desired, the ardent courage which enables a successful soldier to subjugate his country; he had not even the magnanimous ferocity of Danton, who could stand unmoved in the presence of certain death, and shoot paper pellets into the face of the judge prepared and disposed to pronounce his doom; his wonderful popularity was acquired by contrivance and association; by the aid of adherents, whom he feared and sacrificed. Accustomed, from the beginning of his public career, to expect distinction and advantage from the removal of his superiors or competitors, he brought himself to accelerate those events, and, in the progress of his course, accustomed himself to shed torrents of blood, often when he knew no cause but the perpetuation of that terror

* La Vallée, tom. ii. p. 183.

† Thiers, tom. vi. 352; Lacrételle, tom. xii. p. 18.

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LXXXVI.

1794.

His jealousy.

which was the basis of his power. He foresaw a day when a display of clemency would be necessary; but he was not yet disposed to accelerate its advance, or probably reserved it as a means of propitiating the people to his assumption of supreme authority.

In all periods of the revolution, the cry of every predominating party had been, that a chief or leader was wanting; and every faction, from that of the Duke of Orléans to the present time, had pointed to its own favourite as the fit person to fill the post among them, and consequently in the state. Robespierre, venerated throughout France with an extravagant predilection amounting to adoration, was encouraged to expect this advancement; but several of his colleagues viewed the intention with displeasure, while he, apprised of their sentiments, regarded them with dislike and suspicion, and was particularly jealous of every act and every incident which placed them in a situation to share with him the predilection of the public.

Attack on
Collot
d'Herbois.

An event, demonstrative of these feelings, had recently occurred. A young man, named L'Amiral, a clerk in the lottery office, who had been in habits of friendship, and lodged in the same house, with Collot d'Herbois, incensed at the barbarities he had exercised at Lyons, lay in wait to assassinate him on his return home in an evening. Fortunately for Collot, the assassin alarmed him by his threats as he approached; he called for help, the ball intended for him slightly wounded a locksmith whom the outcry had attracted to the spot. L'Amiral was secured; for several days, all the homage of Paris was poured out to the strolling player; the Convention received numerous addresses; in one, from a commune of Paris, they said, they for a long time had entertained doubts of the existence of a Supreme Being; but, after the miraculous preservation of Collot d'Herbois, every possibility of doubt was removed.

Supposed
attempt on
Robespierre.

Robespierre's jealousy at this extravagant prostration was removed by an incident even more simple and unimportant. A young girl, name Cecile Renault, probably insane, called at his abode, and insisted on

admission ; when taken into custody, she declared that her only motive was to see how a tyrant looked. This was sufficient to turn the tide in favour of Robespierre : she had no instrument of death about her, but was immediately transformed into a second Charlotte Corday : the worship of all true believers was restored to the great idol : search was made in all quarters for relations, friends, and even acquaintances, of the two prisoners ; a great many were found, and without the least proof of fact, or shew of probability, L'Amiral and Renault, who had never spoken to each other, together with Renault's father, her aunts, who were nuns, and her brother, with a large number of persons of both sexes, old and young, who had never seen each other, were arraigned, convicted, and executed together, as agents of a Baron Butz, whose crime was undefined, and who had quitted France. Barrère introduced the report of L'Amiral's attempt with the usual assertion that it was one of the plots of Pitt ; that Robespierre was the victim really intended ; he produced letters pretended to have been written in London and in Holland, and intercepted, declaring that the conspiracies of Pitt were directed against the committee, and against Robespierre in particular, reading from one of them a feigned passage, " We are greatly afraid of the influence of Robespierre. The more the government of the French republic is concentrated, the greater will be its strength, and the greater the difficulty of overthrowing it." Under portraits, statues, and bronzes representing his person, with which his apartments were profusely adorned, were poetical inscriptions raising him above Cato and Aristides ; and letters were addressed to him in which he was styled the envoy of God, the new Messiah, and the revived Orpheus, with other flatteries equally base and ridiculous.

Such expressions, and the abject prostration of the French people, warranted the aspiring pretensions of this demagogue ; but they were not without some counterpoise, in letters of reproach, execration, and menace. In fact, from the festival to the Supreme

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1794.

Sanguinary
decree
proposed.

June 10th.

Being, so profuse in blossoms of hope, so barren in the fruits of advantage, may be dated his downfall.

Irritated and alarmed at the events of this day, but incapable of acting or planning any thing, except by means of blood and terror, Robespierre sought to confirm his authority and extinguish opposition by devising, with the aid of Couthon only, and without the privity of his colleagues, a most extraordinary decree. It gave additional scope to the operations of the Revolutionary Tribunal, by dividing it into five sections, each composed of three judges and nine jurors, of whom seven should be sufficient to act. They were all named in the decree; and it was declared to be instituted to punish the enemies of the people. These enemies were classed and described so extensively and indefinitely, that no man could be sure that he might not be comprised. Among many other descriptions, were those, who had sought the destruction of liberty, whether by force or guile; who had abetted the designs of the enemy, by favouring the retreat and impunity of conspirators and aristocracy, by persecuting and calumniating patriotism, corrupting the delegates of the people, or perverting the principles of the revolution, the measures or the laws of government, by false and unfaithful interpretations; who had deceived the people or their representatives to lead them to measures adverse to the interests of liberty; spread false news to divide or to agitate the people, deprave their morals or corrupt their conscience, to diminish the energy or purity of revolutionary and republican principles, or arrest their progress, whether by counter-revolutionary or insidious writings, or by any other device; and, finally, all who by any means, whatever disguise they might have assumed, should have made an attempt against the liberty, unity, or safety, or laboured to pervert the consolidation of the republic. All these were to suffer death. As evidence to convict the enemies of the people, every kind of document, whether material or moral, verbal or written, was to be received, if it could naturally obtain the assent of every just and reasonable mind. The rule for deciding was to be the

conscience of jurymen enlightened by the love of their country, their interest being the triumph of the republic and the ruin of its enemies; and they were to proceed by the simple means pointed out by good sense for attaining the knowledge of truth in the forms determined by law. If there existed proofs, whether material or moral, independently of testimonial proof, witnesses were not to be examined, unless for the discovery of accomplices, or other matters important to the public welfare. And it was declared that the law assigned, as defenders of calumniated patriots, a patriotic jury; but conspirators were to have no defenders.

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It is not easy to imagine, under the form of a law, an edict of destruction more sanguinary and more inevitable than this. It received its definitive character and demonstrated the intention of its contrivers, from a clause which declared that no one could be sent for trial before the Revolutionary Tribunal but by the Convention, or the Committee of Public or of General Safety, or representative of the people on mission, or by the public accuser of the Tribunal.

Accustomed as the Convention had been to record, without examination, every measure suggested by the governing power, this decree roused them a little from the torpor of slavery. "If such a law can pass," Ruamps exclaimed, "nothing is left for the friends of liberty but to blow out their own brains;" and Lecointre moved an adjournment; but the pompous blustering of Barrère and the undisguised fury of Robespierre quelled the incipient opposition, and the law passed unaltered.

Opposed.

A conference in the night enabled the friends of Danton, who were most directly affected by the decree, to estimate correctly their own danger and to consider the means of averting it. "We are doomed to destruction," one of them observed; "marked for the axe of the executioner, as trees in a forest are for that of the woodman*." Still, as the motives of these men were merely personal, as no zeal, no feeling for

Passed.

Further opposition formed.

* The phrase in French is technical and not capable of literal translation, "Il fait des coups-percés de la Convention."

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LXXXVI.

1794.

11th.
The decree
modified.

12th.

The modifica-
tion annulled.

Further pro-
ceedings of
Robespierre.

the people, but only the cowardly apprehension of their own peril impelled them, their conduct was feeble and indecisive; their minds swayed according to the preponderance of different notions of the hazards to be incurred.

Bourdon de l'Oise, assuming the lead of a new party, addressed the Convention on the following day, observing that the members were now placed at the mercy, not only of the two committees, but of every deputy on mission, and of the public accuser. "Does the Convention," he asked, "mean to renounce rights confided to it by the sovereign people?" He hailed exclamations of "No!" "No!" as proofs that liberty was imperishable; and Merlin obtained a declaration that the Convention could not abdicate their own exclusive right to send their members before the Revolutionary Tribunal. Thus was a victory achieved over the tyrannizing power; but the triumph was very short-lived. When attention was again called to the decree, inquiries were made as to the meaning of the clause for granting a patriotic jury as defenders to one class of accused persons, and no defenders to another? and what precise meaning could be affixed to the words, depraving the morals of the people? were they to include every publication in which the strict rules of modesty were not observed? A debate was carried on, in which Bourdon and his friends shrunk before the threats and sarcasms of their opponents: appalled at the repetition of the names of Brissot and Guadet, Danton and Hébert, Pitt and Cobourg, they relapsed into prostrate submission; the explanatory decree was rescinded, and the law of blood remained unaltered*.

These proceedings ought to have formed a warning to Robespierre; but, possessing none of the gifts requisite to the attainment of warm and devoted adherents,

* It was called, from the name of the day on which it was enacted, in the republican calendar, the law of the vingtdeux Prairial. It is observed, that from the 10th of March, 1793, when the Revolutionary Tribunal was first instituted, to the 10th of June 1794 (fifteen months), there had been condemned 577 persons, almost nine a week; but from the passing of the new law to the 27th of July following (not quite seven weeks), 1285, or more than 27 a day, had been sacrificed. —Smythe's Lectures, vol. iii. p. 222.

and having terrified, by the examples of his ruthless implacability, those who might have been disposed to unite with him in a spirited attempt, warned by the aspect of circumstances in the course of his grand celebration, and apprized, perhaps, of sentiments not yet publicly professed by some of his colleagues, he affectingly severed himself from them, and for a period of five weeks was absent from the Committee of Public Safety; a measure which gained him no friends, but gave strength and consistency to the machinations of his enemies. It is said that the immediate cause of his separation from his colleagues was a personal altercation with Billaud-Varennes; but, whatever might be the cause, it was highly prejudicial to him. His adversaries increased in strength and combination, while, as friends, he could only reckon with confidence on Couthon and St. Just*.

A short time shewed that a decisive conflict was inevitable. He must destroy his enemies, or fall before them; and at last he threw down the gauntlet of hostility. He appeared in the tribune of the Convention, after a long secession; and, in a prolix, ill-connected speech, complained of the treatment he received from intriguers and calumniators, both abroad and at home: at the head of those abroad he placed the Duke of York and Pitt; those at home he would not name, but so strongly intimated certain members, that several rose to exculpate themselves. Bourdon moved that the speech might be referred to the committees previously to its being printed; Cambon and Vadier complained of insinuations against them; Couthon defended Robespierre, reprobated the system of calumny which prevailed, insisted that a line of demarcation should be drawn between the patriots and the intriguers, and that the speech should be printed without being referred to the committees. In a tumultuous debate which ensued, Freron demanded the exemption of members from arrest, adding, that no man could speak freely while influenced by fear. Billaud Va-

July 26.
Conflict in the
Convention.

* Mémoires Politiques et Militaires, tom. ii. p. 100.

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At the Jacobins.

27th.
Final contest.

rennes answered, with a logic altogether singular, that he, whom fear hindered from delivering his opinion, was unworthy to be a representative of the people. Barrère spoke a few equivocal words; and, in the end, the printing was ordered unconditionally.

From the Convention, Robespierre hastened to read his speech at the Jacobins, where it excited a general enthusiasm. Couthon denounced the two committees as traitors: Coffinhal proposed the purification of the Convention, which was well understood to import the destruction of all members, except those devoted to his patron; and David, embracing Robespierre, promised, if he drank hemlock, to drink it with him.

When the Convention re-assembled, business was proceeding in its usual channel, till St. Just ascended the tribune, and after stating that the committees of government had directed him to make a report on the state of the country, added that their remedies were inefficient for the existing grievances, and he would speak from himself. Tallien pushed him from the tribune, complained of the audacity of individuals in attacking government, and demanded that the veil should be withdrawn. He was interrupted by Billaud, who, from his seat, demanded an unequivocal explanation: the Convention was between two precipices; the public force was in the hands of a man denounced by the committee, but retained in his command by an individual who for more than a month past had plotted the dissolution of the Convention: that individual was Robespierre. He deprecated tyranny, and asked if any members present wished to live under it. Robespierre was at first thunderstruck; afterward endeavoured to speak, but was prevented by the menaces of Tallien, who, drawing a dagger and brandishing it in the eyes of his colleagues, said he would now destroy him with it, unless the Convention delivered him up to the sword of justice. After some amplification, he moved that the sitting should be declared permanent. His efforts were seconded by Delmas and Barrère, by Billaud, and Collot d'Herbois, who was president. They obtained a decree for the arrest of Henriot, d'Aubigni,

Lavalette, Dufraisse, and all the staff of the national guard; but had not yet the courage to include the tyrant himself. While the President was arranging these decrees, Robespierre got possession of the tribune; but they would not permit him to utter a word. "Down with him! down with Cromwell!" resounded from every quarter. As he persevered in his efforts to obtain a hearing, a member said to him, "Robespierre, you shall not speak; the blood of Danton is upon your head; it flows into your throat, it choaks you!" "Ah, ah!" he exclaimed, grinding his teeth and foaming with rage—"Ah, ah! robbers, it is Danton, then." He was heard no more; Vadier interrupted him, and made a speech, wherein he unfolded his tyranny and all his iniquities. This blow completely overpowered him; he cast a look of piercing indignation toward the Mountain, and reproached their desertion; he is even said, in his extremity, to have turned to the right side to solicit their protection, but in vain. Tallien and Billaud poured fresh accusations on his head with unceasing assiduity. He perceived the world sliding from under him, and that he would speedily be precipitated into the abyss of destruction: "Well!" he exclaimed, in a tone of desperation, "lead me, then, to instant death." "Execrable monster!" exclaimed Dumont, with a threatening gesture, "thou hast deserved it a hundred times!" The decree for his accusation was then put and carried unanimously, and Couthon and St. Just were added. The younger Robespierre and Le Bas, indignant at what was passing, insulted the Convention, and threatened some of the members in such a manner as to get included in the decree of accusation. The officer who was ordered to take them into custody, and lead them to the Committee of Public Safety, impressed with the habitual respect and fear excited by the presence of Robespierre, hesitated to obey the repeated commands of the President, and would not receive the prisoners, till the chief of them made a sign expressive of his obedience to the law, when they were all led out.

Meantime, the rumour of what was doing spread Insurrection

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against the
Convention.

Their mea-
sures.

all over Paris. The Jacobins assembled in their hall, and sent to put the sections in a state of insurrection. The tocsin was sounded, the Greve covered with armed men, and several pieces of artillery planted on the Quai Pelletier, threatening the hall of Convention; the barriers were shut, and Henriot, who had been arrested and had escaped, was indefatigable in collecting an armed force to resist the execution of the decree. The keepers of the various prisons, participating in the general dread excited by his name, had refused to receive Robespierre and the other deputies, who were speedily rescued from their guard, and, having opened a sitting at the Hotel de Ville, outlawed the National Convention. After spending in debate a long time, which conspirators of only moderate talents would have employed much more effectively, they sent a part of the armed force, and Henriot at their head, to dissolve the Convention. But that body, convinced that they were struggling for their lives, had, in the time so foolishly wasted by their opponents, concerted measures against them; Legendre had dispersed the Jacobin club, seven deputies were sent into various parts of the city with a proclamation, explaining the true state of things; a decree of outlawry was passed against the Commune; and when Henriot, at the head of his troop, made his appearance in the court-yard of the Tuileries, they put him out of the law also. His soldiers, panic-struck, refused to obey his orders, and the people demanded his arrestation; confused and abashed, he hastened to the Hotel de Ville, and informed his comrades of his ill success. The Convention, seeing the operation of their new engine, proclaimed sentence of outlawry against Robespierre and all his associates, and set a price on their heads.

July 28.
Proceedings at
the Hotel de
Ville.

The seven deputies had succeeded in raising a party of the armed inhabitants of Paris in their favour, and with these, reinforced by some soldiers, who remained faithful to the national representation, found themselves able, at about three o'clock in the morning, to march against the Commune, having first persuaded the cannoneers at the Quai Pelletier to resist the

commands of Henriot, who was now out of the law, and to join them. The Hotel de Ville might have made a powerful resistance, and perhaps have turned the tide of success; but the soldiers of the national guard, hearing that the Commune and the deputies there assembled were outlawed, refused obedience; the cannoneers were differently disposed; but the curious mob had obtained possession of the gun-carriages, and used them as ladders to enable them to look into the windows of the Hotel de Ville, to see how the conspirators behaved in this emergency. Bourdon, having read to the people the proclamation of outlawry, rushed into the Hotel de Ville, armed with a sabre and pistols, and followed by a considerable force. The discomfited confederates were most of them taken on the spot, a few escaped, but were speedily brought to justice.

Second arrest
of Robespierre.

Robespierre was in one of the apartments, sitting squat against a wall with a knife in his hand, apparently intended for the purpose of self-destruction, but which he durst not use. A soldier, apprehending some resistance, fired two pistols at him, one of which wounded him on the head, the other broke his under jaw; he was taken and conducted before the Committee of General Safety, his broken jaw bound up with a cloth passed under his chin, and tied to the top of his head. A message was sent to the Convention to know if he should be brought to the bar; but the members unanimously exclaimed that they would no more suffer their hall to be polluted by the presence of such a monster. He lay for some hours in an anti-chamber of the Committee, stretched on a table, motionless; but, torn with racking recollections, and abandoned to remorse, he pinched his thighs with convulsive agony, and scowled gloomily around the room, when he fancied himself unobserved. After enduring, in this situation, the taunts of all who beheld him, he was carried to the Hotel de Dieu, where his wounds were dressed, merely to prolong his existence, and from thence was sent to the prison of the Conciergerie.

His agony.

He was brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal

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Condemnation

and execution.

Character.

the same day, together with his accomplices, in number twenty-one; as they were all out of the law, the identification of their persons alone was necessary, and sentence of death was demanded against them by their former friend and creature, Fouquier Tainville. In the evening of the same day, at about five o'clock, they were conducted to the place of execution, amidst the acclamations of numerous spectators, who considered the procession before them as the earnest of future happiness. The streets, the windows, and the roofs of houses were crowded; even the guard who escorted them partook of the general transport; and, which they were never before known to do, joined the cry of *Vive la Convention!*

Such was the fall of this blood-stained, tyrannical demagogue, related circumstantially, from the effect which his domination and destruction had on the interests of this nation and her allies. It is not necessary to expatiate on his character: a consideration of his conduct facilitates the compression of it into a few words. He had considerable, but not first-rate, abilities: his hatreds were vehement, insatiable, implacable; but he was incapable of love, friendship, or gratitude. He had the art to take advantage of every turn in political affairs brought about by others; but had not the courage to risk any thing in the accomplishment of them, nor the honesty to own his obligations, nor the forbearance to abstain, when it seemed to be his interest, from murdering those to whom he was so largely indebted. His talents and his character have been diversely considered; he was extolled during his life and power, beyond the extent to which human abjectness could be expected to attain. After his death, every crime committed in Paris or the departments was, with equal injustice, attributed to him. Attempts have since been made to exonerate him from this heavy load of censure, and to represent him as innocent, if not meritorious, in the scenes which were passing; in talents eminent, and in conduct mild and merciful. His literary abilities may be known and tested by what remains of his speeches and his writings; his want of

wisdom, caused by his deficiency in manly spirit, is apparent in many circumstances of his life, and particularly in the close of it: to discharge him from the imputation of ferocious cruelty and premeditated inhumanity, is impossible, while his conduct toward the King, the Queen, and the Princess Elizabeth, and many others, down to his last intended victims, is remembered*.

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* The narrative of the last portion of Robespierre's Life is contained, without any material variance, in all the books of history and anecdotes of the day. See Biographical Memoirs, art. Robespierre, vol. ii. p. 426, to the end, and the authorities there quoted. Beside these, see the more recent works, La Vallée, *Histoire des Factions*, tom. ii. p. 134, 149 to 189.—Lacréteille, tom. ii. p. 312-342, &c.; tom. xii. liv. 21.—Thiers, tom. vi. chap. 6 et 7; and Professor Smythe's *Lectures*, 38 to 43.

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